



THE HOMILIST.

CONDUCTED BY

DAVID THOMAS, D.D.,

AUTHOR OF THE "BIBLICAL LITURGY," "PHILOSOPHY OF HAPPINESS," "GENIUS
OF THE GOSPEL," "COMMENTARY ON ACTS OF THE APOSTLES," ETC.

VOL. III. EDITOR'S SERIES.

SAN FRANCISCO

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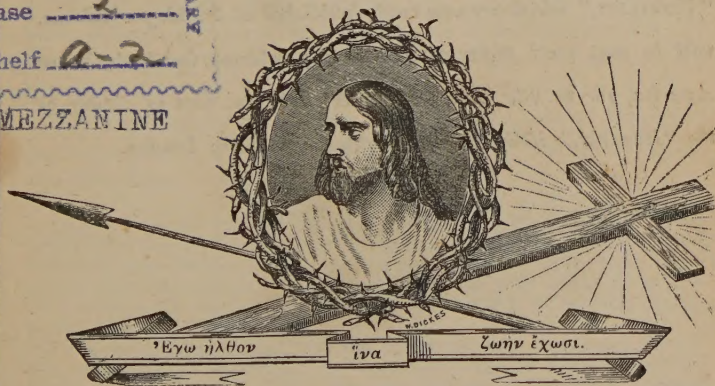
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VOLUME XXVIII. FROM COMMENCEMENT.

MEZZANINE

SEMINARY



"THE LETTER KILLETH, BUT THE SPIRIT GIVETH LIFE."—*Paul.*

LONDON:
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Either of the three volumes of the EDITOR'S SERIES of the "HOMILIST," which are now ready published at 5s. 6d. per volume, will be sent POST FREE DIRECT to any address in Australia or America, for 6s. 9d. Address—Robert Johnson, care of Editor of the "Homilist," Holly Bush, Loughborough Park, London.

PREFACE.

THIS Volume, the TWENTY-EIGHTH of the entire Work, is the *third* of the *New Series*—THE EDITOR'S SERIES. It is so called because the Editor has determined to bestow upon it special attention, and make it in every respect the best that has appeared. He is certain that no competent and impartial critic will compare these Volumes with any of the preceding ones without pronouncing a verdict for their superiority.* If success is to be taken as a test of merit, these Volumes have the advantage, for their circulation has been unsurpassed.

Although upwards of ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND VOLUMES have been sold, it will be gratifying for our friends to know that the demand is as great as ever.

*The following is a testimony from an able clergyman:—"With respect to the EDITOR'S SERIES of the HOMILIST, any praise from me would be simply superfluous. I have, as you know, always held in the highest esteem the skill, originality, freshness, and genius with which it has been conducted, but I must confess that the *last Series* is in all respects incomparable."

"A London Vicar" says: "I can conscientiously say that I do not believe that the HOMILIST has ever been approached by any Pulpit Serial of the past or present, and that this First Volume of the Editor's Series is amongst the *best of all the Volumes that have appeared.*"

Extract from *Dundee Daily Advertiser*.—"Without copying Robertson of Brighton, there is a prevailing spirit in this publication which perpetually reminds you of his sublime utterances. Dr. Thomas is a man of a spirit so profound and comprehensive, so Catholic and charitable, that the HOMILIST could not be other than that which it is. For the man always underlies the book which he writes. The HOMILIST is so rich in exquisite utterances that the attempt at quotation in this notice would be to commence illimitable enlargement. On the whole, we have two things to remark in this publication:—viz., first, that the HOMILIST is the *best* preacher's manual which we know; second, the last Volume is the *best*, being the commencement of a New Series."

As the old key-note will still rule the melodies of the HOMILIST, and no new specific description is requisite, the former Preface may be again transcribed.

First: The book has *no finish*. The Editor had not only not the time to give an artistic finish to his productions, but not even the *design*. Their incompleteness is *intentional*. He has drawn some marble slabs together, and hewn them roughly; but has left other hands to delineate minute features, and so polish them into beauty. He has dug up from the Biblical mine some precious ore, smelted a little, but left all the smithing to others. He has presented "germs" which if sown in good soil, under a free air and an open sky, will produce fruit that may draw many famishing spirits into the vineyard of the Church.

Secondly: The book has no *denominationalism*. It has no special reference to "*our body*" or to "*our Church*." As denominational strength is not necessarily *soul* strength, nor denominational religion necessarily the religion of humanity, it is the aim of the HOMILIST to minister that which universal man requires. It is for man, as a citizen of the universe, and not for him as the limb of a sect.

Thirdly: The book has no *polemical Theology*. The Editor—holding, as he does, with a tenacious grasp, the *cardinal* doctrines which constitute what is called the "orthodox creed"—has, nevertheless, the deep and ever-deepening conviction, first, that such creed is but a very small portion of the truth that God has revealed, or that man requires; and that no theological system can fully represent all the contents and suggestions of the great Book of God; and, secondly, that systematic theology is but means to an end. *Spiritual morality is that end*. Consequently, to the heart and life every Biblical thought and idea should be directed. Your system of divinity the author will not disparage; but his impression is, that they can no more answer the purpose of the Gospel, than *pneumatics* can answer the purpose of the atmosphere. In the case of Christianity, as well as the air, the world can live without its scientific truths; but it must have the free flowings of their vital elements. Coleridge has well said, "Too soon did the doctors of the Church forget that the heart—the moral nature—was the beginning and the end, and that truth, knowledge, and insight were comprehended in its expansion."

The Editor would record his grateful acknowledgments to those free spirits of all Churches, who have so earnestly rallied round him; to the many who have encouraged him by their letters, and to those, especially, who have aided him by their valuable contributions. May the "last day" prove that the help rendered has been worthily bestowed; and that the HOMILIST did something towards the spiritual education of humanity, in its endeavours to bring the Bible, through the instrumentality of the pulpit, into a more immediate and practical contact with the every-day life of man!

DAVID THOMAS.

Holly Bush, Loughborough Park,
Brixton.

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A HOMILY

ON

Opposite Ideas of Life: The Materialistic and the Spiritual.

"ONE GENERATION PASSETH AWAY,
AND ANOTHER GENERATION COMETH,
BUT THE EARTH ABIDETH FOR EVER."

"THE SUN ALSO ARISETH, AND
THE SUN GOETH DOWN, AND HASTETH
TO HIS PLACE WHERE HE AROSE.
THE WIND GOETH TOWARD THE
SOUTH AND TURNETH ABOUT UNTO THE
NORTH: IT WHIRLETH ABOUT CONTI-
NUALLY, AND THE WIND RETURNETH
AGAIN ACCORDING TO HIS CIRCUITS.
ALL THE RIVERS RUN INTO THE SEA:
YET THE SEA IS NOT FULL: INTO THE
PLACE FROM WHENCE THE RIVERS
COME, THITHER THEY RETURN AGAIN."

"ALL THINGS ARE FULL OF LABOUR:
MAN CANNOT UTTER IT: THE EYE IS
NOT SATISFIED WITH SEEING, NOR THE
EAR FILLED WITH HEARING. - THE
THING THAT HATH BEEN IT IS THAT
WHICH SHALL BE: AND THAT WHICH
IS DONE IS THAT WHICH SHALL BE
DONE: AND THERE IS NO NEW THING
UNDER THE SUN. IS THERE ANY
THING WHEREOF IT MAY BE SAID,
SEE THIS IS NEW? IT HATH BEEN
ALREADY OF OLD TIME WHICH WAS
BEFORE US."

VOL. XXVIII

"HE THAT DOETH THE WILL OF
GOD ABIDETH FOR EVER."—1 John
ii. 17.

"HEREAFTER YE SHALL SEE
HEAVEN OPEN, AND THE ANGELS OF
GOD ASCENDING AND DESCENDING
UPON THE SON OF MAN."—John i.
51.

"WHOSO LOOKETH INTO THE PER-
FECT LAW OF LIBERTY, AND CON-
TINUETH THEREIN, HE BEING NOT A
FORGETFUL HEAREER, BUT A DOER OF
THE WORK, THIS MAN SHALL BE
BLESSED IN HIS DEED."—James i.
25.

A

"THERE IS NO REMEMBRANCE OF FORMER THINGS: NEITHER SHALL THERE BE ANY REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS THAT ARE TO COME WITH THOSE THAT SHALL COME AFTER."—Eccles. i. 1-11.

"HE BEING DEAD YET SPEAKETH."
—Heb. xi. 4.

THE resistless chariot of destiny, or rather the kind providence of heaven, has borne us onward to the dawn of a new year. Eighteen hundred and seventy is gone down into the abysses of past ages. With it, millions of men have departed the shores of time, and with it, too, unnumbered crimes have been registered against our race—registered on the books that are to be unsealed on the world's great judgment day. The exit of one year from the stage of our short life and the entrance of another, to play a mysterious part with our destinies, can scarcely fail to impress us with the problems of life. With the memory of the past, and the strange bodings of the unknown future pressing upon the heart, who does not ask, with all solemnity, what is life?

There are at least two very opposite ideas of human life working in men; and these ideas make life to man virtuous and blessed, or vile and miserable. For are not ideas the great working forces in human experience? Do they not fashion our characters, settle our destinies, create the universe in which our spirits really live? What are those two opposing ideas? They are found in the sacred passages above. Materialism propounds the one, spiritual Christianity the other. Solomon speaks what material philosophers teach, and what all mere worldly men feel life to be; Christ and His Apostles reveal the experience of all genuine disciples of spiritual Christianity. Let us look a little at these two ideas.

I. The one idea represents life as a TRANSIENT APPEAR-

ANCE, the other as a PERMANENT REALITY. Solomon says, speaking out the philosophy of materialism, "One generation passeth away and another generation cometh." "All is vanity, all is vanity"—a mere pageant, an empty show. Men, what are they? They rise from the dust and to the dust they go. A whole generation is but a troop of pilgrims, pursuing their journey from dust to dust. They soon reach their destination and disappear, but the earth, the old road over which they trod their way, "abideth for ever." Its mountains stand, its valleys bloom, its oceans roll, and its rivers flow as ever. Indeed it seems even more firm and solid by the tread of successive generations. In a little more than thirty years each generation completes its journey. To-day I walk through the bustling thoroughfare of a commercial city; unnumbered crowds rush by me on my way: merchants, clerks, artisans, paupers, princes, lawyers, statesmen, judges, authors, preachers, the old, the young, the cultured and the rude, the rich and the poor, all press on with hurried step. Thirty years hence, should I walk that thoroughfare, a greater throng, in all probability, will rush by me, but they are not the same men and women, boys and girls. With a few exceptions, all in the former crowd have disappeared, and these are all fresh faces with fresh anxieties, hopes, and plans. Many of the buildings remain; there is the old cathedral, the exchange, and the law courts, and the streets look as of yore. But where are the men I saw there before? They are gone. "One generation passeth away and another generation cometh, but the earth abideth for ever." "This is life," says the materialist; "this is life," says the worldling.

"Life's but a walking shadow—a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing."—*Shakespeare.*

"Let us eat and drink then, for to-morrow we die." Ephemeron as we are, let us sport in the sunbeam while we have it; the starless night of *eternal* extinction will soon spread over us. So say the Materialists; their philosophy has no higher idea of life.

In sublime contrast with this is the idea propounded in the New Testament. "He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." "He that believeth in Me," says Christ, "shall never die." It is true that the earth is a thoroughfare for generations, but it is not the *whole* journey of man. It is only a stage, the first stage, and the shortest too. The dust alone returns to dust, the "soul returns to God who gave it." What the earth gave man, man leaves with it, when he steps into the death-ark which bears him to other shores. All who have ever trod this earth are living, thinking, conscious still. They are prosecuting their journey in other worlds; they are treading the paths of other planets; they are discharging the grand functions of their being in worlds shone on by other suns. "I know that when the earthly house of this my tabernacle is dissolved, that I have a building of God above, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

II. The one idea represents life as an ENDLESS ROUTINE, the other as CONSTANT PROGRESS. "The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose. The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits. All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the river come, thither they return again." Solomon saw in nature what modern philosophers call the law of *circularity* everywhere. He saw it in the sun rising from darkness in the heavens, running his long round, then reaching the goal of darkness again. He

saw it in the winds, whirling about from south to north, and from north to south, sweeping their circle, never going beyond it. He saw it in the waters; evaporation bringing them out of the sea, shipping them in clouds, and these, having sailed round to their destined points, discharge their cargo in showers whose waters rush into their channels and back to the sea whence they came. "All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full." Thus he saw the sun, the wind, the rivers, moving in an invariable circle, returning ever to the point whence they set out. He compares this to human life, a mere endless routine.

It is true that nature is rounded, and moves roundly; circular in form and circling in motion. The universe in its *forms* is like one great chain of rounded links, increasing regularly in their circumference from the lowest, encompassing only an atom, to the highest, encircling the very throne of nature. The *motions*, too, of all seem circular; day comes out of night, and passes into night again; spring out of winter, and circles into winter again; life out of death, and sweeps round to death again. The motion of all organic life is from dust to dust. This is, says the Materialist, but a figure of man's moral history; there is no progress,—it is an eternal round. The whole river of human history is like the blood in the body, flowing from the heart back to the heart again. The existing generation repeats its predecessor; the same blunders, crimes, follies, accidents, suicides, murders, etc., travel round from generation to generation. The whole history of humanity is but one vast wheel, of which each generation is a spoke. On each spoke, as the great wheel rolls slowly on, you may see the same things depicted, with some little variety in fulness, size, and shade. As regularly as birds appear in spring, and flowers in summer, do the modes of thought and types of manners of past ages re-appear in the suc-

ceeding ones. "There is no new thing under the sun." That which hath been in the brains, hearts, and manners of men a thousand years ago are in them now, in a little different form. The history of one generation is the prophecy of another. Man's moral life is not like the sun, shining more and more unto perfect day, for it breaks out of darkness and descends into gloom again. Mankind, in all their efforts to improve themselves, are only like Sisypheus of ancient fable, rolling a heavy stone up a steep hill; the moment the hand is withdrawn it rushes to the valley again.

This is a crushing idea of life; it comes over the soul like a black rayless cloud of ice. There is some truth in it, but thank God it is not the whole truth. Against it I bring another idea, the idea of spiritual Christianity. "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man." Souls do not revolve in such fixed cycles; their destiny is not to roll, but to rise, not to gyrate, but to grow; they have to reach their perfection not by revolving, but by development. The true path of the soul is not a circle,—it is a ladder, like Jacob's ladder, reaching from earth to the throne of the Eternal. Every golden rundle it climbs, it pierces a new cloud, gets new light; it hears new voices, sees new heavens, and thus passes "from glory to glory." "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He does appear we shall see Him as He is."

III. The one idea represents life as UNSATISFYING LABORIOUSNESS, the other as a BLESSED ACTIVITY. "All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it; the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with "hearing," &c. Yes, "all things are full of labour." In every part of nature, hard work is going on,—there is elaboration everywhere. It is so especially in human life. Labour is the lot of man. There is labour not only in the crowded

factory, at the flaming forge, in the deep mines, in the fields, and on the roads, but in the exchanges of commerce, in the chambers of professions, in the library of students, in the studios of artists, in the halls of science. There is the labour of the brain as well as of the muscle. "All things are full of labour." There is human labour in everything; in our clothing, in our food, in our habitations, in all the necessities, comforts, and enjoyments of life. Our civilization is full of labour. It has always been so; the iron law under which man hath lived from the beginning is, "by the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat," "The thing which hath been it is that which shall be." Materialists say all this labour is *necessarily* unsatisfying, it yields no happiness. "The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing." This is true true, I have no doubt, to the materialist. Labour, whether mental or manual, if not inspired with a right spirit, fails to yield any true satisfaction of soul. What said Lord Chesterfield, the brilliant courtier and the man of letters? "I have enjoyed all the pleasures of the world, and I do not regret their loss. I have been behind the scenes. I have seen all the coarse pulleys and dirty ropes which move the gaudy machinery; and I have seen and smelt the tallow candles which illuminate the whole decorations, to the astonishment of an ignorant audience."

Voltaire, the brilliant wit, the literary idol of France, expressed his experience of life in one word, "*Ennui*." The man who has laboured most, and laboured in the highest departments of labour with a worldly spirit, must ever experience dissatisfaction of soul. The man that

"Drank every cup of joy, heard every trump
Of fame; drank early, deeply drank; drank draughts
That common millions might have quenched—then die
Of thirst, because there was no more to drink."

Yes, true, for ever true! *Worldly* labour can never

satisfy the human soul. You may as well endeavour to empty the ocean with your bucket, or quench Etna with your tears, as to get happiness out of any amount or kind of labour wrought in a worldly spirit. The idea of labour, however, propounded by Christianity is the opposite of this. Labour *need* not be, and *ought* not to be unsatisfying. A good man is "blessed in his deed." This idea is the true one. All labour should be inspired with the spirit of love to God, and trust in His paternal care. Such labour will be ever satisfying, ever blessed. The labour of love is the melody of life. He is "blessed in his deed;" not *for* his deed, but *in* his deed. Virtue is its own reward. Every true deed beats heavenly music into the soul.

IV. The one idea represents life as DOOMED TO OBLIVION—the other as IMPERISHABLY REMEMBERABLE. "There is no remembrance of former things: neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after." The past is forgotten, the present will soon be in oblivion. Men and their doings are speedily lost in forgetfulness. The greatest of their age never can live long in the memory of posterity. Even those in their day, whose figures filled the horizon of public thought, and whose words ran swift as lightning from man to man, and nation to nation, soon flow down into the abysses of the unremembered. Great kings, conquerors, sages, orators, tribes, and nations were once here, and struck their influence deep and wide, whose names are now unknown. As painted bubbles on the stream, they are broken and are lost. Even those whom their successors strove hard to keep in the memory of succeeding ages gradually disappear beneath the dark and silent wave. Time wipes out their names from the most durable marble—moulders the metal, stone, parchment and paper on which they were inscribed.

“Some sink outright.
O’er them and o’er their names the billows close ;
To-morrow knows not they were ever born.
Others a short memorial leave behind.
Like a flag floating when the bark’s engulfed,
It floats a moment, and is seen no more—
One Cæsar lives—a thousand are forgot.”

Such is the gloomy idea of materialism—an idea under whose dark and chilling shadow men may well weep and wail. But is it true? Only partially—only true so far as the memory of posterity is concerned. Posterity, it is true, soon forgets the greatest of its ancestors ; but their ancestors, nevertheless, are not forgotten. They are remembered by their contemporaries, by their friends, and their God. Souls are undying ; no soul can be forgotten ; its words will echo for ever, its movements produce interminable vibrations. “The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.” The good man, “being dead, yet speaketh.” Thank God ! Christianity tells us that man will never be forgotten. He will live for ever in the memory of those who love him. The genuine disciple of Christ has his name written in an imperishable book—“the Lamb’s Book of Life.”

CONCLUSION. Brothers, which idea of life will you accept? That of the materialist, or that of Christian spiritualism? Which is the more rational? Which better matches the faculties of your nature? Which is the more in accord with the longings and aspirations of your inner life? Which is the more sunny—the more invigorating and ennobling? Which will the better qualify you to begin this year with a true heart, enable you to discharge its duties faithfully, enjoy its blessings with a grateful soul, and meet its trials calmly and undismayed?

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Job.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of great scholarly and critical worth; such as Drs. Barnes, Wemyss, Mason, Goode, Noyes Lee, and Herman Hedwick Bernard: the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering: but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in an order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.

PROLOGUE.—Before directing attention to any particular passage of this book, it seems necessary to notice, in the most condensed way, the following points in relation to the whole book itself: its *hero, age, author, style, canonicity, purpose, and divisions*.

First: Its *hero*. Is Job a historic or a fictitious character? Is he a veritable man, or the creation of fancy? That he had a historic existence we hold, for the following reasons:—(1.) The book has far more of the attributes of a narrative of facts than of a delineation of fancies. (2.) Other parts of the Inspired Volume refer to him as an historical character. See Ezek. xiv. 14; James v. 11. Thus Ezekiel refers to him as Jeremiah to Moses and Samuel (Jer. xv. 1), and James just as he had referred to Elisha as a real character. (3.) The book, although written in a poetic form, has all the attributes of history. It gives the details of persons, places, events, &c.

Secondly: Its *age*. When did Job live? The most competent judges fix the period as earlier than the age of Abraham, and consider that the book should be read between the 11th and 12th chapters of Genesis, as a supplement to the brief record of the early history of mankind. The reason for this belief is the long life of Job, extending to 200 years; the absence in the book to any allusion to Mosaic law, or of any reference either to the exodus of the Jews from Egypt or of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah; and the correspondence of the worship, manners, and customs referred to in the book with those of patriarchal times. He lived, in all probability, then, between the Deluge and the call of Abraham; and his existence is a proof that God has never left the world without witnesses to His truth.

Thirdly: Its *author*. Some refer its authorship to Elihu, some to Job himself, and some to Moses. We are disposed to regard the book as autobiographic. It is evident from the book itself, xxiv., that the art of writing was known in the days of Job; and it is perfectly evident from the remarkable ability displayed by Job in his discussions, that he was fully equal to the authorship. The conclusion to which some

of the ablest critics have come is, that the work was composed by Job himself in the period of rest and prosperity which succeeded his trials, and came to the knowledge of Moses during his residence in Arabia, and was adopted by him to represent to the Hebrews, in their trials, the duty of submission to the will of God, and to furnish the assurance that He would yet appear to crown with abundant blessings His own people, however much they might be afflicted.

Fourthly: Its *style*. The style, with the exception of the first and second chapters, and the last part of last chapter, is poetic. The language is a mixed dialect of the Mosaic, Hebrew, and the Arabic* throughout. "In all countries," says a modern able expositor, "poetry is the earliest form of composition, as being best retained in the memory." And in the East especially it was customary to preserve their sentiments in a terse, proverbial, and poetic form (called *maschal*). Hebrew poetry is not constituted by the rhythm or metre, but in a form peculiar to itself. 1. In an alphabetical arrangement somewhat like our acrostic; for instance, Ps. i. 2. 2. The same verse repeated at intervals, as Ps. xlii., cvii. 3. Rhythm of gradations, psalms of degrees (cxx., cxxxiv.), in which the expression of the previous verse is reserved and carried forward in the next (Ps. cxxi.) 4. The chief characteristic of Hebrew poetry is parallelism, or the correspondence of the same ideas in the parallel clauses. The earliest instance is Enoch's prophecy (Jude 14), and Lamech's parody of it (Gen. iv. 23). Three kinds occur—(1.) The synonymous parallelism, in which the second is a repetition of the first, with or without increase of force (Ps. xxii. 27; Is. xv. 1); sometimes with double parallelism, (Is. i. 15). (2.) The antithetic, in which the idea of the second clause is the converse of that in the first (Prov. x. 1). (3.) The synthetic, where there is a correspondence between different propositions, noun answering to noun, verb to verb, member to member; the sentiment, moreover, being not merely echoed or put in contrast, but enforced by accessory ideas (Job iii. 3, 9). Also alternate (Isa. li. 19), "Desolation and destruction, famine and sword,"—i.e., desolation by famine, and destruction by the sword. Introverted, where the fourth answers to the first, and the third to the second (Mic. vii. 6). Parallelism thus often affords a key to the first interpretation. For fuller information, see Lowth ("Introduction to Isaiah," and "Lecture on Hebrew Poetry,") and "Spirit of Hebrew Poetry," by Herden, translated by Marsh.

Fifthly: Its *canonicity*. How, when, or by whom the books which now compose the Jewish canon were compiled, collected, and arranged, no one has yet determined with certainty. It is evident, from the chapter already referred to, that the book was known by Ezekiel, who flourished about 600 years B.C. The Seventy translated it 270 years B.C. Josephus places it in the number of historical writings; Jerome introduced it

* See *Job and his Times*, by Wemyss.

into the Vulgate; and almost all the Fathers of the Church have quoted it: it is twice quoted in the New Testament, and its morality and theology agree in spirit with the Divine Book.

Sixthly: Its *purpose*. "The precise object of the book has given rise to much discussion. Mercenary selfishness was the charge brought against Job. In the end the charge is disproved. Job is assured that the Judge of all the earth will do right, and resolves still to trust, though God should slay him (xiii. 15.) The nature and power of faith are thus illustrated, as is the identity of true piety in every age. Such, perhaps, was one chief object of the inspired writer in this composition. The book, moreover, displays the Providence of God in its unscrutableness and mercy, and sets forth in unrivalled magnificence the glory of the Divine attributes. It illustrates human depravity, exhibits faith in a coming Redeemer and a future life, speaks of sacrifice as the appointed means of acceptance, and shows the benefit of intercessory prayer."

Seventhly: Its *divisions*. The book has been divided into three general sections—I. Historical. Introduction given in prose, chaps. i. and ii. II. The argument or controversy given in verse, chaps. iii. to xlii. 6. III. The conclusion in prose, xlii. 7-19.

For a more elaborate view of the points referred to in this prologue, we recommend our readers to introductions of the book of Dr. Samuel Lee, Judah Lev. Ben-zer in Dr. Bernard's Commentary, and Dr. Barnes, whose introduction to the Book of Job, taken as a whole, is decidedly the most thorough and comprehensive which we have seen.

Subject: A GOOD MAN IN GREAT PROSPERITY.

"There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil. And there was born unto him seven sons and three daughters. His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east. And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them. And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually."—JOB i. 1-5.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS. Ver. 1.—"There was a man in the land of Uz." Uz, north of Arabia Deserta, lying towards the Euphrates. It was in this

neighbourhood, and not in that of Idumea, that the Chaldeans and Sabeans, who plundered Job, dwelt. The Arabs divide their country into the north, called Sham, or 'the left;' and the south, called Yemen, or 'the right;' for they faced east, and so the north was on their left and the south on their right; Arabia Deserta was on the east; and so Job is called (ver. 3) "The greatest of all the men of the east." Arabia Petræa on the west, and Arabia Felix on the south. "*Whose name was Job.*" Some say the name is derived from an Arabic word, signifying, to return or repent; others from a Hebrew word, signifying 'one greatly tried.' Among the ancient Jews, names were often given to persons to indicate something special in their lives. The Emir of Uz received, perhaps, his name for this reason. "*And that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God and eschewed evil.*" This clause has been rendered thus:—"And that man was pious and upright, a fearer of God, and a turner away from evil." The meaning is, that he was a righteous man, worshipping the one God and abstaining from all evil.

Ver. 2.—"*And there was born unto him seven sons and three daughters.*" In the east, and in primitive times, it was considered a great privilege to have children, and a great curse to be without them; and a greater blessing to have many sons than many daughters.

Ver. 3.—"*His substance also was seven thousand sheep,*" &c. No houses or land are mentioned as belonging to him, for this great Emir led a Nomadic life, according to the customs of his age and times. He dwelt in moveable tents. With the oxen he tilled the soil, and with the camels he prosecuted his journeys. His stock of cattle was truly very large. "*And a very great household*"—in the margin, "husbandry." The productions which he reaped from the soil he cultivated were very abundant, "*So that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east.*" By the east is meant, those living east of Palestine. He was the magnate of the region in which he dwelt; a man of great authority, both on account of his high moral character and great possessions.

Ver. 4.—"*And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day.*" From chap. iii. ver. 1, it may be that reference is here made to their birthdays. Some, however, think that the reference is to the Sabbath, the day on which God rested from His works. In ancient times, as at present, the custom prevailed of celebrating the birthday by feasting,—see Gen. xl. 20, where we find that Pharaoh made a feast to his household on the occasion of his birthday. These periodical domestic gatherings indicate the great harmony that prevailed in the Emir's family. "*And sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them.*" It was the custom in the east for the daughters to live in their mother's home (see Gen. xxiv. 27), whilst the sons went out to follow their agricultural and other pursuits. The fact that the sisters were invited attests that the feast was not one of intemperate revelries, but one of affectionate family intercourse.

Ver. 5.—"*And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about.*" This means, most probably, "gone round in a circle;" when the

whole circle of their birthdays had been kept, and they commenced anew. It was the first banquet of another social circuit. "*That Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all.*" The father acted as the priest of the family; he sanctified them by cleansing ablution (Gen. xxxv. 2; Exod. xix. 10-14; 1 Sam. xvi. 5). After this he offered burnt offerings according to the number of his sons. This was done in the morning. It is well to begin the day with worship: Jesus said so. "*For Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.*" This is the special reason why Job officiated: fear, lest in their conviviality his children had dismissed God from their hearts and descended into the profane. "*Thus did Job continually.*" At all their feasts he acted like this.

HOMILETICS.—The subject of these verses is: *a good man in great prosperity.*

I. Here is A GOOD MAN. He was "perfect." By this is meant, not that he was sinless and perfectly holy, but that he was complete in all the parts of his moral and religious character; he did not attend to one class of duties to the exclusion of others, cultivate one attribute of virtue regardless of the rest. He was complete. All the parts of the plant of goodness within him grew simultaneously and symmetrically. First: In relation to his *general conduct* he was "*Upright.*" He pursued the straight road of rectitude, turning neither to the right or left hand; he did what his conscience believed was right, regardless of issues. Secondly: In relation to his *God* he was *Devout*. He "feared God," not with a slavish fear,—his fear was a loving reverence. He was far removed from all irreverence of feeling, he was profoundly religious. God filled the horizon of his soul, he looked at all things in their relation to the Divine. Thirdly: In relation to *evil* he was an *Apostate*. He "eschewed evil;" he departed from it; he hurried from it as from the presence of a monster. However fashionable, gorgeously attired, institutionally and socially powerful, he loathed it, and fled from it as Lot from Sodom. Fourthly: In relation to his *family* he was a *Priest*. "He offered burnt offerings." He interposed with God on their behalf; he was a mediator between his own children and the Great Father of spirits. Like a good father he sought the

moral cleansing of his children and their reconciliation to the Eternal.

II. Here is a good man VERY PROSPEROUS. First: He was prosperous as a *Father*. "There were born unto him seven sons and three daughters." In ancient times, to be destitute of children was esteemed a great calamity: the greater the family the greater the parental blessing. Things have changed now: here in our England a large family is regarded as a terrible infliction. What greater blessing in this world can a man have than a large number of loving hearts to call him father? Secondly: He was prosperous as a *Farmer*. The stock here described has been estimated to amount in our money to the sum of £30,000. Here, and now, this is a good fortune, but yonder, and then, it stood for at least fifty times the amount. Thirdly: He was prosperous as a *Citizen*. "For this man was the greatest of all the men in the east." There were many great men in the east in those days, no doubt, men whose names would strike awe into the soul of the populace, but Job was the greatest of them all. Elsewhere he describes the power which he wielded over men. "When I went out to the gate through the city, when I prepared my seat in the street! the young men saw me, and hid themselves," &c.—Job xxix. 7.

CONCLUSION: We offer two remarks on this subject.

First: *That a good man in great prosperity is what antecedently we might have expected to find everywhere in the world.* Under the government of a righteous God, one would naturally expect that the best man would everywhere be the most prosperous, and that goodness and poverty would never be found in association. This, undoubtedly, would have been the case had man not sinned: this, in all probability, is the case in all worlds but this. Heaven will explain the anomaly to our satisfaction ere long.

Secondly: *That a good man in great prosperity is not a common scene in human life.* Generally, up to this hour, in the world's history the best men have been the poorest, and the worst men amongst those who hold the prizes of the world in their

hand, and determine the material destinies of their age. This has been the trying problem of ages; this was that which now grievously afflicted the soul of Job.

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

OUR PURPOSE.--Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this **TEHILIM**, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough **HOMILETIC** treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

OUR METHOD.--Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:--(1.) The **HISTORY** of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words, is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.--(2.) **ANNOTATIONS** of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.--(3.) The **ARGUMENT** of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.--(4.) The **HOMILETICS** of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonizing methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

Subject: COURAGE IN LIFE'S STORMS.

"The Lord is my light and my salvation;
Whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the strength of my life;
Of whom shall I be afraid?
When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes,
Came upon me to eat up my flesh,
They stumbled and fell.
Though an host should encamp against me,
My heart shall not fear:
Though war should rise against me,
In this will I be confident.
One thing have I desired of the Lord,
That will I seek after:
That I may dwell in the house of the Lord
All the days of my life,
To behold the beauty of the Lord,
And to inquire in His temple.
For in the time of trouble
He shall hide me in His pavilion:

In the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me ;
 He shall set me upon a rock.
 And now shall mine head be lifted up
 Above mine enemies round about me :
 Therefore will I offer in His tabernacle sacrifices of joy ;
 I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord."—Ps. xxvii. 1-6.

HISTORY.—This Psalm is entitled a "Psalm of David," and there is no reason for supposing that he was not its author. It is Davidic in spirit and in style. The occasion of its composition is a matter, as yet, of pure speculation. Some say it was written at his first inauguration as king (2 Sam. ii. 4) ; others, that it was on the occasion of his last anointing (2 Sam. v. 3) ; others, that it was composed after his deliverance from death by Abishai (2 Sam. xxi. 16) ; and others, with, I think, greater probability, after Jonathan came to visit him in the wood, and strengthened his hand in God (1 Sam. xxiii. 16.) "All attempts," says Hengstenberg, "to find out any occasion to which the Psalm especially referred have failed. And from the failure of these we may draw the inference, either that David originally uttered the Psalm from the soul of the oppressed righteous man, or that, if he wrote it in reference to a particular occasion, he generalized his own experience."

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver. 1.*—"The Lord is my light and my salvation." Light and salvation express but one idea—deliverance; the one expresses it figuratively, the other literally. "Whom shall I fear?" There seems in this expression an indignant contempt of fear. What in the universe can intimidate me since God is my "light," my "salvation," and "my strength." "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Ver. 2.—"When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell." It is not meant, of course, that they came literally "to eat up his flesh," but that they came upon him like savage beasts of prey to devour him. "They stumbled and fell." This means that *they* fell, not *I*—they thought to destroy me, but they destroyed themselves. The blow they aimed at me rebounded on their own heads, "and they stumbled and fell."

Ver. 3.—"Though an host—that is, a multitude, an organized army—should encamp against me—should place themselves in battle array—my heart shall not fear." I will be fearless and defiant. "Though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident." "In this"—in what? In the fact that God is "my Light," "my Salvation," and "my Strength."

Ver. 4.—"One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life." It would seem from this that David was a wanderer distant from the scene of public worship, and that he earnestly longed to enter the sacred precincts once more. "One thing,"—the thing that I desire more than anything else. He does not mean to dwell for ever in that

place, but to dwell in the *spirit* of that place—in keeping with the character of that place—in fellowship with the God of that place. The purpose of that house was fellowship with God, and to dwell in it was to enjoy permanent communion with Him. “*To behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple.*” To admire and to investigate the Divine, and that for ever was his paramount desire.

Ver. 5.—“*For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion : in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me.*” The “tabernacle” and pavilion here mean the same place—the place of public worship. Perhaps there is a reference here to the fact that God sheltered Moses in the tabernacle when the people were going to stone him (Numbers xiv. 10.) It would seem as if he desired not only to be *with* God, but to be hidden in Him—to be absorbed, as it were, in the Divine. “*He shall set me upon a rock,*” *i.e.*, He shall place me upon a height inaccessible to my enemies.

Ver. 6.—“*And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me : therefore will I offer in His tabernacle sacrifices of joy. I will sing, yea I will sing unto the Lord songs of praise.*” Since I am safe in the innermost shrine of His house—since I am on a rock, which no billows can affect, on an altitude which no enemy can scale, I will offer sacrifices of joy. Jubilee offerings, accompanied with shouts for deliverance (Num. xxiii. 21.)

ARGUMENT.—The Psalm consists of three parts—(1.) A triumphant declaration of confidence in God. (2.) An earnest appeal in prayer to God. (3.) A general exhortation to all to wait on God.

HOMILETICS.—Homiletically the Psalm suggests four subjects for meditation—(1.) Courage in life's storms. (2.) Shelter in life's storms. (3.) Prayer in life's storms. (4.) Exhortation in life's storms. The first two are the subjects of the verses under notice, *viz.*, courage in life's storms and shelter in life's storms.

I. COURAGE in Life's Storms. Here three things are to be observed—First, *The Courage was founded on confidence in God.* Why does the writer appear so fearless and defiant here? Here is the answer. He trusted in the Lord as his “Light,” his “Salvation,” his “Strength.” When the soul feels that God is with it, it becomes invincible ; it can dare and endure all things. Secondly, *The Courage was heightened by memories of past deliverances.* “When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.” He had met with storms before, but they were hushed ;

enemies had malignantly assailed him before, but they had been vanquished—and all this through God. He who had thus been with him and for him, his guide and deliverer in the past, he knew would be with him in the present and in the future too. Memory of past mercies strengthens our faith in future supplies. If God has done so much for us in the past, we may safely argue that He will do as much in the time to come. Thirdly: *The Courage defied all future enemies.* “Though a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.” He who had been with him in the past would be with him in the future. What had he, therefore, to fear? He awaited coming tempests, even the most furious, with a triumphant confidence. Oh, for this courage of soul—courage based upon confidence in God, courage based upon the memory of past goodness, courage facing the mysterious future with a jubilant soul.

II. SHELTER in Life's Storms. Four things are observable here. First: *The scene where the shelter was sought.* “That I may dwell in the house of the Lord.” God has ever had on this earth *places* where He has *especially* manifested Himself; at the “burning bush,” under “the cloudy pillar,” in the tabernacle and the temple, and now in Christian churches, where His name is recorded. As the place where God was specially manifested in David's time, he looked to the tabernacle. Scenes of public worship are the places to be sought in times of special trouble. Secondly: *The means by which the shelter is to be secured.* “That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple.” (1.) Dwelling with God; entering the inmost shrine, where the Eternal received His friends. Communion with God is the means of soul-shelter. (2.) Delighting in God. “To behold the beauty of the Lord”—to gaze upon His perfections, to be ravished with His glory. (3.) Inquiring after God. “To inquire in His temple.” The investigating intellect employed in conducting the soul nearer and nearer still to the presence of the Eternal Father.

Thirdly: *The source from which the shelter is derived.* The place resorted to, and the means employed, are rendered effectual by God Himself. "In the midst of trouble *He* shall hide me in His pavilion: in the secret of His tabernacle shall *He* hide me. *He* shall set me up upon a rock." "The Lord is my sun and my shield," &c. Fourthly: *The spirit in which the shelter is accepted.* It is the spirit of confidence. "Now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies around about me." It is the spirit of triumphant praise. "Therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy. I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord."

CONCLUSION: Trust in God intelligently, heartily, entirely, and permanently: and what then have we to fear? Who can move us when we are on the immoveable and incorruptible rock? What storm can reach us when we are in the innermost shrine in the Temple of Eternal Peace?



A Homiletic Glance at the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians.

The student is requested to keep in mind the following things, which will throw much light upon the Epistle. First: The circumstances of the writer when he wrote. He was a prisoner in Rome. During his residence there, in "his own hired house" (Acts xxviii. 30, 31), from the spring A.D. 61 to 63, he wrote the Epistles to the Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, and to the Ephesians. It is generally supposed that this Epistle to the Ephesians was the first he wrote during his imprisonment. Secondly: The circumstances of the persons addressed. They lived, it is thought, in Ephesus, an illustrious city in the district of Ionia, nearly opposite the Island of Samos, and about the middle of the western coast of the peninsula commonly called Asia Minor. It had attained in Paul's day such a distinction as in popular estimation to be identified with the whole of the Roman province of Asia. It was the centre of the worship of the great goddess Diana. Paul resided here on two different occasions. The first, A.D. 54, for a very short period (Acts xviii. 19-21); the second, for a period of more than two years. The persons therefore addressed in this letter are those whom he had converted from paganism, and in whom he felt all the interest of a spiritual father. Thirdly: The purpose of the letter. The aim of the Epistle seems to be to set forth the origin and development of the Church of Christ, and to impress those Ephesian Christians, who lived under the shadow of the great temple of Diana, with the unity and beauty of a temple transcendently more glorious. For the minute critical exegesis of this apostolic encyclical, we direct our readers to the commentaries of Alford, Webster and Wilkinson, Jowett, Harless, Stier, Eadie, Hodge, and last, though not least, Ellicott. Our aim will be to draw out, classify, and set in homiletic order, the Divine ideas reached by the critical aid of such distinguished scholars.

Subject: TYPES OF TRANSCENDENT VIRTUES.

"But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to

you all things: Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he may comfort your hearts. Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen." Eph. vi. 21-24.

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver. 21.*—"That ye also may know my affairs and how I do."

This means, that ye may understand my condition, my feelings, and all concerning me, in which you feel an interest, "How I do,"—how I fare. *Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things.*" From other passages (see Acts xx. 4, Col. iv. 7; 2 Tim. iv. 12; Titus iii. 12) we learn that this Tychicus was of Asia Minor, of which Ephesus was the capital; that he was the bearer of the letter to the Church at Colosse, and probably of the second Epistle to Timothy, and that Paul proposed sending him to Crete to succeed Titus. Paul here calls him "a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord." He was high in Paul's confidence. When, or where, or how, he was converted, are points on which we have no information: nor do we know why he was now at Rome. In Paul's days there were no postal arrangements, no telegraphic agencies by which to send communications to those at a distance, hence, Paul had to employ letter-carriers,—Tychicus was one.

Ver. 22.—"Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs." "Our affairs:" All those things referring to us personally and apostolically in which you are deeply interested. "And that he might comfort your hearts." How? Probably by reading and interpreting the Divine Epistle of which he was the bearer.

Ver. 23.—"Peace be to the brethren." This is the usual form of benediction. See Matt. x. 13; Luke xxiv. 36; Rom. xv. 33; Gal. vi. 16; 1 Peter v. 14; 3 John 14. "Love with faith." Love united to faith; he wished for them that faith that worketh by love. "From God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." The Father and the Son are here united as the objects of worship and the source of all spiritual blessings.

Ver. 24.—"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." The word sincerity is in the margin, "incorruption;" and this seems to be more true to the original. It means in all honesty and truthfulness, without any dissembling or hypocrisy.

HOMILETICS.—In these verses we have three types of transcendent virtues—a type of elevated friendship, a type of spiritual benevolence, and a type of Christian catholicity.

I. A type of ELEVATED FRIENDSHIP. Paul here does three things which show the purity and the worth of his friendship.

First: *Introduces a noble man to his friends.* Some are very anxious to keep their friends to themselves, and if possible to monopolize their thoughts and their hearts: and some, if they introduce a friend at all, only those of an inferior type. Paul introduces Tychicus "a beloved brother, and faithful minister." You cannot confer a greater benefit on your friends than to commend to their confidence a noble man; the gift of such a man to them is more valuable than lordly estates or mighty kingdoms. Secondly: *He introduced a noble man to their friendship entirely for their own advantage.* There are those who introduce men to their friends for the sake of getting something from them; but not so in this case. Paul does not ask them to do anything for Tychicus: nor does he ask them to send back through Tychicus any favour to him. . . . He sends Tychicus in order to serve them in two ways. (1.) To satisfy their anxieties as friends. They would naturally be anxious to know something concerning the "affairs" of the man who lived and laboured in their city for three years, and around whose neck their fathers fell in tears when he bade them adieu.* They would like to know how this, their father in Christ, fared, now a prisoner in Rome. To satisfy the natural craving of their hearts he now sends Tychicus—he would tell them all. I should like to have seen Tychicus deliver this letter, and to have heard the thousand eager questions. (2.) To promote their happiness as Christians. "And that he may comfort your hearts." Paul knew well the trials to which the Church at Ephesus was exposed, both from Jews and Pagans. He knew they wanted comfort. The letter he sent abounded with comforting thoughts, and he knew that a loving brother like Tychicus would skilfully and efficaciously apply the healing balm. Here is—

II. A type of SPIRITUAL BENEVOLENCE. Paul's heart goes out in well-wishing, and what did he wish for his brethren at Ephesus? No secondary favours, but the highest blessings from God the Father and His blessed Son. First: *Divine*

* See my Homiletic Commentary on Acts of Apostles *in loco*.

peace. "Peace be to the brethren." Mark where the peace comes from—"From God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." There is a peace that does not come from that source, a peace that comes from the devil, a moral stagnation of soul—something like the stillness of that murky atmosphere that nurses and forebodes the thunder, the lightning, and the hurricane which spread devastation over sea and land. This is the peace of God. The peace of God is—(1.) Peace of an approving conscience. (2.) Peace of conscious security. (3.) Peace of accordant affections. (4.) Peace of harmonious activities. Secondly: *A conjunction of love and faith.* "Love with faith." There is a love and also a faith that are not of heaven. Divine love and faith are always united in a good man. Divine faith "works by love," works by love as the labourer works by the sun.

These are the blessings spiritual benevolence desires for men, and they are in truth the germs of all good. Give me these and I want no more. Out of them my Paradise will bloom: they are the Nebulæ which will one day encircle me with the brightest of heavens. Give the race these, and soon all crimes, sufferings, discords, miseries, will cease. Here is—

III. A type of CHRISTIAN CATHOLICITY. "Grace be with all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth." Love Him purely, love Him in reality, love Him as He ought to be loved. Wherever they are, in whatever land, of whatever tribe or kingdom, happiness to them! The language of modern sects is grace be to all them that are Baptists, Methodists, Independents, Episcopalians, &c. The language of true Christian Catholicity is "Grace be to all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ"—of all creeds or no creed, churches or no church.

CONCLUSION.—Here end our reflections on this wonderful Epistle. Our walk through this section of the great garden of truth, whose aromas have refreshed, whose beauty has charmed, and whose objects have challenged our thoughts and excited our devout admiration, is now ended. Should others

follow our footsteps with keener eyes and finer senses, more apt to discern the beautiful and the good, they will be able to discover for themselves, and reveal to others, much more than we have done. When we began our walk we were afraid that we should meet some of those grim Calvinian dogmas which certain theologians assured us were there, but we never met their shadow. There are no theological weeds and thistles here. All is free and fresh as nature, as fitted to the human soul as light to the eye and breath to the lungs.



Germes of Thought.

Subject: THE VALLEY OF DRY BONES AND THE TRUE PREACHER.

"The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and caused me to pass by them round about: and behold there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry."—Ezekiel xxxvii. 1, 2, &c.

THIS passage was intended to set forth in a most impressive manner the degradation of the Jews in Babylonian captivity, and their restoration through God, by the instrumentality of Cyrus. The prophet was now with the captives, and delivered his prophecies on the river Chebar, about six hundred years B.C. I shall use the passage as the picture of a true preacher of the Gospel.

I. THIS PREACHER HAD A FINE CHURCH TO PREACH IN. It is in "the midst of the valley." It is abroad in open nature. His Church is encircled by the hills, and over-arched by the heavens; its roof and floor and walls are ornamented by the great Architect of the universe. The true preacher of Christ has open nature for his temple. He need not be confined to the buildings of man's hands, or tied to the conventionalities of society. Wherever men are, on the valley, the hill-tops, the sea-shore, the high road, or in the market-place, he can open his mission, he can deliver his message. Thus Christ

and His Apostles preached. Their ministry was not confined to "temples made with hands." The Gospel matches nature in (1.) the *freeness* of its spirit; (2.) the *universality* of its provisions; and (3.) the *unconventionality* of its forms.

II. THIS PREACHER HAD AN AFFECTING CONGREGATION TO ADDRESS. The valley was full of bones, "very many and very dry." No indication of life was seen, even the flesh was gone, nothing but blanched bones. Unregenerate men are everywhere represented as spiritually dead—"dead in trespasses and sins." The principle of life, which is supreme love to God, is extinct. Unregenerate souls are like dead bodies in many respects. First: *They are the creatures of the outward.* While there is life in the human body it has a power to appropriate the external to its own use; but when life has departed, the external elements make it their sport. It is so with unregenerate souls. They are the creatures of circumstances. Secondly: *They are loathsome to the eye.* The human frame that is beautiful in life becomes so offensive in death, that love seeks a place to bury it out of sight. Unregenerate souls are loathsome to the eyes of all who are truly and spiritually alive.

III. THIS PREACHER HAD A DIVINE SERMON TO DELIVER. "And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? and he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord." The preacher was the mere *mouthpiece* of God. He said what God told him to say, nothing more, nothing less. In his sermon—First: *He appealed to His dead auditory.* This showed his strong *faith* in God. His own reason would suggest to him the absurdity of his work, but he trusted God. God commanded him and he did it. Secondly: *He appealed to heaven.* "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." From heaven the power came, and that power he invoked with all the earnestness of his nature. Thus with the true preacher of Christ. His words will be

powerless unless made powerful by the mighty Spirit. "Not by might nor by power."

IV. THIS PREACHER HAD MARVELLOUS RESULTS TO WITNESS. "As I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold, a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone." First: *The results were what he worked for.* The efforts he exerted were for resuscitation, and resuscitation came. Every true preacher will get, to some extent, that for which he earnestly labours. Secondly: *The results were gradually developed.* "Bone came together, bone to his bone." This was the first stage. "The sinews and the flesh came up upon them, the skin covered them above." This was the second stage. Then the breath came into them. This was the third stage. "And they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army." This was the consummation. Here is—(1.) *Motion*—bones moving. (2.) *Organization*—bones knitted together and covered with flesh. (3.) *Vitality*—the organization animated. (4.) *Exertion*—stood on their feet "a great army." Under every true preacher the work in a congregation goes on something in this way: there is *motion*, a little stir, and excitation of the faculties. There is *organization*—the man has taken the form of life. There is *life*—a little spiritual animation, but no exertion. There is *exertion*—he stands up as a soldier. The moral resurrection of souls is completed only in the last stage.

CONCLUSION. Let us go forth in our work unencumbered by conventionalities; let us be as natural as nature. Let us deliver God's message to the dead, trusting to His power to give it effect. Let us invoke the aid of His quickening Spirit, then we may expect to effect some amount of resuscitation in the world's vast valley of dead souls.*

* For illustration see "Pulpit and its Handmaids," page 60.

Subject: GOSPEL FAITH THE GREAT WORKER.

"Faith which worketh by love."—Galatians v. 6.

DETACHING these words from the context, and confining our attention at present entirely to them, we observe—

I. That Gospel faith works. It was an unhappy division, says Selden, that has been made between faith and works. Though in my intellect I may divide them, just as in the candle I know there is both light and heat; but yet, put out the candle, and they are both gone; one remains not without the other. So it is betwixt faith and works; nay, in a right conception, *fides est opus*—if I believe a thing because I am commanded, that is *opus*. I offer three remarks on the working of faith.

First: It works in the *whole life*. There is a faith that works merely in the intellect. It influences thought, and that is all. There is a faith that works in the imagination, and nowhere else. There is a faith that works in the senses. The true Gospel faith works the *whole* man. It gets hold of the heart, and the heart always works the brain, the muscles, the mental faculties, and the corporeal limbs.

Secondly: It works the whole life *naturally*. There is a faith that works in man in such a way as to make him very unnatural—makes him the creature of distortion and grimace. Sin denaturalizes man. This faith so works as to restore him to nature; makes him speak, and look, and act naturally, not artificially.

Thirdly: It works the whole life *constantly*. There is a kind of faith that works by fits and starts—works spasmodically. But genuine Gospel faith works in a man as the heart works within him, beating his blood from hour to hour. Faith, then, is a worker; not a dry creed, not an empty profession, not a floating theory, but a mighty worker in human life—a worker doing the highest work in the world.

II. Gospel faith works BY LOVE. There are faiths that work by avarice, envy, malice, ambition, and such demon passions, but this faith works by love. It works by the love that it has brought into the soul—supreme love to God.

Faith in God's love to us brings up within us that love to Him.

First: This work is the *strongest* work. The man that works by a strong love is mighty. Love is invincible courage. Love is iron endurance. Love is all-conquering energy. This love dares the dungeon, defies the stake, sings in the flames.

Secondly: This work is the *usefullest* work. He who works from supreme love to God, and from generous sympathies to his fellow-men, is the most useful worker. No one serves his country or his race so really or so efficiently as he. His services to his race as compared with the services of all others, are as the quickening sunbeam to the lunar rays in the ministries of nature.

Thirdly: This work is the *happiest* work. What a man does from love he does happily. Jacob, we are told, served seven years for Rachel, and after then seven more, and in addition he was content to serve six more, and all the labour of these years seemed to him as nothing, because he loved her. Love oils all the wheels in the great machinery of nature. The doing of what love prompts us to do is the joy of our souls.

CONCLUSION.—Learn from this the excellence of genuine personal Christianity, and its test as well. None are real disciples of Christ who are not working from an intelligent faith and by a holy love.*



Mark's Preface: THE UNITY AND PROGRESS OF DIVINE
DISPENSATIONS.

Mark i. 1-8.

I. THE GOSPEL HAS HAD THREE BEGINNINGS, YET IT IS RIGHT TO SPEAK OF EACH AS THE BEGINNING—

1st. The beginning as seen in the Divine counsels, when the Gospel was but a *Thought*.

2nd. The beginning as seen in the Incarnation, when the Gospel became a *Person*.

* For illustration, see "Pulpit and its Handmaids," page 58.

3rd. The beginning as seen in its believers, when the Gospel becomes a *New Creation*.

II. ONE BEGINNING OF THE GOSPEL IS ALWAYS INTRODUCTORY TO ANOTHER. It is so in the highest human thinking. There is, first, the thought, then the agent or representative, then the result. From Mark's Preface we learn that there was—(1.) A prophecy. (2.) A pioneer. (3.) An introductory rite. The importance of this view is shown by two considerations—

1st. *It indicates the consistency and progressiveness of Divine revelation.* The terms *Old Testament* and *New Testament* are equal to *old seed* and *new flower*. They are the same in different stages of unfoldment. God's truth is one.

2nd. *It supplies a test of the genuineness of professed revelation.* The fragment must be of the same quality as the mass. There must be continuous augmentation of light and power. The movement is from John to Jesus, never from Jesus to John. Look at the Old and New Testament, and mark the *ascending* line of thought.

III. NO BEGINNING OF THE GOSPEL CAN BE TRUE AND EFFECTUAL EXCEPT AS IT LEADS TO A SPIRITUAL CONSUMMATION. The prophets pointed to John, John pointed to Jesus, Jesus pointed to the Holy Ghost. This fact shows—

1st. The transitoriness of all mere *ceremony*.

2nd. The uselessness of all mere *knowledge*.

3rd. The possibility of the highest *fellowship with God*.

The subject addresses a lesson—

First: To STUDENTS. You have to deal with a harmonious and progressive relation. In order to be wise master-builders, you must grasp the revelation as a *whole*. You must know it in its proportions, analogies, and tendencies; otherwise you might be sacrificing a principle to an accident, or exaggerating the ceremonial to the neglect of the spiritual.

Second: To PIONEERS. A man only works well in proportion as he knows the measure of his power and the limit of his mission. When the frame-maker mistakes himself for

the painter, art is degraded. It does not follow that because a man knows the alphabet he can write a book. The pioneer must never go in the king's clothes. April cannot do the work of August.

Third : To CHURCHES. Have you received the Holy Ghost? You have admired the *prophets*, but have ye received the Holy Ghost? You have fought sectarian battles at the river side, but have ye received the Holy Ghost? You have even taken upon you the name of Christ, but have ye received the Holy Ghost?

Poultry, London.

JOSEPH PARKER, D.D.



SERMON TO SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHERS.

"And they brought young children to Him, that He should touch them, and His disciples rebuked them that brought them," &c.—Mark x. 13-16.

THIS is one of the most affecting scenes that adorn the wonderful history of Christ. The deep solicitude of Jesus respecting the spiritual welfare of children is clearly manifested, as also is the faith and confidence of the parents or guardians in His love and power to do them good; and, we may add, that the disciples, by aiming to be very religious, became unnatural, which was frequently the case, and this arose from the false ideas of devotion which they attached to their Master. The occasion in itself was light and transitory, but the principles and truths which it involves are profound, universal, and of deep interest to every thoughtful mind. What is it then to bring children to Christ?

I. IT IS TO BRING THEM TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST. Jesus himself has withdrawn from us. He is now in heaven, and a child can understand the impossibility of being introduced to Him literally. Still He is accessible, and the means of access to His spiritual and Divine presence is, by His own word, in three ways—

1. *By Reading.* The duty of teaching the art of reading devolves on the parent primarily and naturally; but many

have not the disposition to do so; hence the piety of the Church established and supported the Sunday-school. Christian parents, introduce your children yourselves to Jesus; let it not be done by others. Take your children kindly, feelingly, by the hand, and open to them this Book of God, and help them to understand, and believe, and practise what is read.

2. *By Conversation.* Direct personal instruction has proved highly successful to the young, because children are remarkably sensitive and confiding. Therefore it is impossible to converse earnestly and sincerely with a child without throwing the seed of virtue, truth, and love into the virgin soil of his mind, that will fructify some time to come. Want of heart is one of the great defects in private and public teaching.

3. *By Example.* The child is remarkably active, operative, energetic, and imitative. The child imitates persons with whom he has to do; not only the moral attributes, but the particular modes and forms of moral conduct and the moral disposition, so that more real teaching is imparted passively to our fellow-beings than any other way. The more mechanical part of teaching children to read and to converse with them, if counteracted by personal conduct, will go for nought; and this simple consideration will solve a great many problems and difficulties connected with the inefficiency of parental and general teaching.

II. IT IS TO INTRODUCE THEM TO THE LOVE OF CHRIST. One of the Evangelists says, "That he should put his hands on them and pray." When a child is introduced to Jesus three things take place—

1. *He believes in the love of Jesus.* Jesus Himself said, again and again, that He loved men, and children too. Not only did He say so, but all His actions, the entire course of His life, verified the deep, strong diffusive love which gushed out in His life, refreshes and delights the heart of man; and when the child is thus brought to look on His love—

2. *He reciprocates the love of Jesus.* It is impossible to behold the love of Jesus, and have faith in it, without returning it in various ways. This is what constrained Paul and others to

act, to suffer imprisonment, and love martyrdom. "For the love of God constraineth us." If we wish to have the religion of love in a child, let us show Jesus until the child says, I am bound to Jesus; I love Jesus, and cannot do otherwise.

3. *He imitates the love of Jesus.* The child will not only become amiable, but lovely and loving. Our religious teaching has not produced the amiableness, the loveliness in children which it ought. It is painful to see sometimes in Sunday schools sad exhibitions of pride, and impetuosity, and want of submission. One of the principal intentions of all schools should be to make children exhibit love.

III. IT IS TO BRING THEM UNDER THE BENEDICTION OF CHRIST. I believe that these children, by the blessedness which Jesus imparted, were made heirs of immortality. They received the gift of everlasting life, and probably became in after-life active and laborious missionaries. Observe also that Jesus commended them, saying, "Unless you become as little children, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven;" not that they possessed great moral excellence, but that they possessed that conscious dependence and confiding spirit. There are two encouragements—

1. *The invitation of Christ*—"Suffer little children to come unto me." What a glorious scene, what a lovely sight! Jesus, the God-man, Jesus, the glory of the earth, the Judge of the world, the eternal Son of God, takes the darling in His arms, looking with an eye full of affection upon the little one, and blessing him.

2. *The displeasure of Christ.* The disciples said, Let the teacher alone. Keep these urchins away; He is on His way to the Throne. What have they to do with Him? They will only degrade His dignity. Jesus was much displeased, and said, Where is your love of humanity? In what school have you formed your views? Keep little children from Me! "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." He is very angry with those who think that children should be kept away from Him lest they should be made bad servants, bad citizens, &c. Christ says, I am displeased with you, ye

ecclesiastics, ye politicians, ye statesmen, ye philosophers, who say, teach the rich, raise higher the children of the nobility and gentry, but do not raise the lower orders; you will revolutionize society in a short time; there will be no order, no social happiness; take heed. What Jesus is pleased with in human society He will have. "The poor have the Gospel preached unto them." Keep away from His path, because His voice is gone forth, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

THE LATE REV. CALEB MORRIS.



Subject: CHRIST'S GIFT.

"My peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth give I unto you."
—John xiv. 27.

I. His gift is *peace*. The hostilities in the moral field arrayed against the unregenerate man are unutterably awful. They are these:—

First: *Conscience*. His own personal conscience, then that of the whole moral universe.

Secondly: *Truth*. Truth is fact apprehended by mind. All truth, therefore, in all created minds, and in the mind of God too, is hostile to him.

Thirdly: *God*. All His nature, providence, revelation, retribution is against him.

Fourthly: *Law*. "The strength of sin is the Law." That is, its strength to punish is the Law. The power to punish a thief or a murderer is in a nation's criminal law. His crime arms the nation's strength against him. His arrest, imprisonment, execution, are the deed, not of the policeman, jailor, hangman, or judge, but of the *law*, and these are backed by all the force and sentiment which a nation can command. How terrible, then, to have *universal law* hostile!

O God, my God, these, Thy terrors, are crushing me! "Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."

II. His peace is a *gift*; that is—

First: It is what *the man has not*. Who gives what another has already? He can never find peace by looking over his own history, nor into his own conscience. The first feeling of conscious spiritual life is always dread. Peace must come from without, not from within. The sailor in the storm must not cast his anchor into the hold of the ship, but right out of it into the deep, dark sea bottom. "This hope we have as an anchor," &c., &c.

Secondly: It is what a man *may safely call his own*. What title is more valid than a gift? and what a right to give Christ has! and how free and full *His* gift must be!

Thirdly: It is what binds a *man's heart to the giver*; and this always in proportion to its *intrinsic worth*, its *antecedent need*, and its *unconditional generosity*.

III. Christ's gift of peace *transcends all the gifts of the world*.

First: In its *sincerity*. Peace be with you was a common form of benediction among Jews, or the Latin *Pax vobiscum*, or our good-bye. But these are often mere etiquette, or cover a hollow heart, or a feigned and even guileful friendship. Not so Christ's.

Secondly: In its *reality*. Men cannot give what they may most earnestly wish; so moral, mental, physical blessing are beyond their power to bestow. Not so Christ.

Thirdly: In its *cost*. The world gives what costs it little; but what did this peace cost *Him*!

Fourthly: In its *authority*. *My* peace! It can silence all the criminations of law and conscience, earth and hell. "Who shall lay anything to the charge," &c., &c.

Fifthly: In its *power*. This sustains beneath *all* the ills of life. Apostles and early Christians laughed at the terrors of the axe, the faggot, the wheel, and the dungeon. They simply said, We are Christians, you can kill us, but cannot hurt us. In the midst of tortures they sang hymns to Christ.

Sixthly: In its *permanence*. All the world can give will perish with it. Not Christ's gift.

Seventhly : In its *spirit*. The gifts of the world are often only the price they pay to insult you. They are arrogant, humiliating, exacting, browbeating. You often sell your manliness, self-respect, independence, in accepting them. A noble soul would scorn the proffered boon, and rather starve than take it. But look at Christ's spirit ! "Come unto Me, all ye," &c., &c., "for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

Stroud.

W. WHEELER.



The Pith of Renowned Sermons.

The sermons of some of the greatest preachers of England are lost to modern men through their verbiages ; it is the intention, under this section, to give from time to time their pith and spirit.

No. XIII.—JOHN HOWE, M.A.

Subject : PEACE CONSIDERED AS GOD'S BLESSING.

"The Lord will bless His people with peace."—Psalm xxix. 11.

THE design of the text seems to be twofold ; to represent—

I. HOW VALUABLE A GOOD PEACE IS IN ITSELF, AS IT STANDS OPPOSED TO BLOODY AND DESTRUCTIVE WARS. To see this—

First: Consider *war in its causes*. These are principally two—the wickedness of men, and the just vengeance of God thereupon. These two, concurring and falling in together, must be understood to be the causes of so great a calamity among men in the world. Very plain is it that war is a mark of apostasy, and stigmatises man as fallen from God, in a degenerate, revolted state ; it is the horrid issue of men's having forsaken God, and of their being abandoned by Him to the hurry of their own furious lusts and passions, the natural and the penal effect of their having severed themselves and broken loose from the Divine government. "From

whence are wars ; are they not from your lusts ?” &c. There cannot be a greater instance that men are forsaken of God, than when controversies do arise between men and men, between nation and nation ; it is presently to be decided by a bloody sword. This speaks a monstrous degeneracy in the intellectual world, and from the original rectitude that belongs to the nature of man, which in his primitive state did stand in a temperament of reason and love. That there should be differences about *meum* and *tuum* in a creature of that constitution, is itself a horrid thing ; but then that such differences are to be determined only by violence—that presently they must hereupon run into war—Good God ! what an indication is this that reason, wisdom, justice, and love are fled from this earth ; and it speaks rebellion against God in the highest kind, for it is a subversion of the most fundamental law of His kingdom over the intelligent world. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, &c., and thy neighbour,” &c. A dismal spectacle, and subject of contemplation to the inhabitants of the purer and more peaceful regions, to behold a Divine offspring, the sons of God, now transformed into sons of the earth, and tearing in pieces one another, for what some possess, and others covet. Yea, and to a calm and uninterested spectator on our own globe, this can be no grateful prospect ; to view the history of all times and nations, and take notice how full it is of such tragedy—countries from age to age made *Aceldamas*, “fields of blood,” on this account, of extending or confining empire and dominion, of invading another’s, or defending one’s own.

Secondly : Consider *war in itself*. What is it but the destruction of creatures made after the image of God ? of whom He has so high a value, and whose lives, even for that very reason, He is pleased to fence and secure by a severe law, “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made He man.” But in war is a formed design of destroying such lives by multitudes.

Thirdly : Consider *war in its consequences and effects*.—Property is gone ; laws lose their force ; magistrates their authority and reverence ; common order turned into confu-

sion; families torn in pieces; countries laid waste and desolate. Besides all this, the sacred rites and mysteries of religion are neglected and profaned; care for immortal souls, when it is most necessary, is thrown out of doors: and multitudes are hurried down to perdition, neither dreaded by themselves, nor apprehended by the destroyer; souls are passing by shoals into eternity, they not considering it who are sent, nor who are sending them.

II. WHAT THINGS ARE REQUISITE TO MAKE THIS A REAL AND COMPLETE BLESSING, CAPABLE OF BEING APPROPRIATED UNTO GOD'S OWN PECULIAR PEOPLE.

I shall do two things—mention the requisites themselves, and show their requisiteness.

First: *The requisites.* (1.) *Conjunction with copious effusion of the Spirit of God* (Ezekiel xxix. 23-9.) (2.) *When the Gospel of peace has its free course, and a large spread in the world* (Micah iv. 2, 3.) (3.) *When, according to Divine dictates, kings do reign and princes decree justice* (Proverbs viii. 15; Isaiah i. 26.) (4.) *When God gives pastors after His own heart.* (5.) *When hereupon wickedness languishes.* (6.) *When there is a very great effusion of a holy new nature.* (7.) *When hereupon the Divine government obtains, and takes place in the minds and consciences of men* (Psalm lxvii.) (8.) *When there is a manifest prevalency of Divine love among men that bear the same name of Christians.* (9.) *When God appears to be reconciled to such a people.* For in His favour is life.

Secondly: *The requisiteness.* (1.) *There is such a thing as a special blessing*, as with Jabez (1 Chron. iv. 9, 10), very distinguishable from common blessings. There is a spiritual sort of blessing that may be enclosed in the external blessing, and particularly in this of peace. (2.) *Such an external blessing as that of peace is not a complete blessing.* Because (a.) it is no argument of God's special favour. (b.) Men are not made by it the better men. (c.) They may by it become so much the worse men. "The prosperity of fools destroys them." The first Scipio opened the way to the Roman power, the second to their luxury. Their virtue languished, and they

were conquered by their own vices, who before could conquer the world. (*d.*) Men, notwithstanding an external peace, may be as miserable in this, and in another world, as if they had never known it; and much more if they have been by it the more wicked. A philosopher can tell you that blessedness cannot be a thing separable from myself, nor a *χριστον τι*; it can much less be such a thing as may leave me miserable to all eternity.

CONCLUSION.—SEE WHAT CAUSE OF THANKSGIVING WE HAVE, WITH REFERENCE TO PEACE AS A GENERAL GOOD; AND ALSO WHAT CAUSE OF SUPPLICATION, THAT WE MAY HAVE PEACE AS THE SPECIAL BLESSING OF GOD'S PEOPLE. All the matters in which we have noticed peace as being so valuable a thing are reasons for such *thanksgiving*. And the reasons for such supplication are such things as are wanting to make this blessing of peace a complete blessing. The mercies included in the peace will be unimproved and lost without the mentioned additions; whereof all the heads that were recited belong to one, namely, that of spiritual blessing.

Let us, I pray you, learn to distinguish between a self-desirable good, that in its own nature is such—so immutably and invariably that it can never degenerate or cease to be such—and what is only such by accident, and in some circumstances may be much otherwise. External good is but *res media*, capable of being to us sometimes good, and sometimes evil, as the case may alter. Blessings of this kind may become curses. “I will curse your blessings, yea, I have cursed them already.” The philosophy of pagans would have made them ashamed to place their felicity in anything without, or foreign to themselves. Nothing but wickedness can make us miserable. Nothing can be good to any man till he hath the Spirit that makes him good. And we are greatly concerned to supplicate mightily for the effusion of that blessed Spirit, for these two purposes especially—

First: *That there may be a larger diffusion of vital religion, wherein stands, indeed, men's being at peace with God.*

Secondly: *That there may be that spirit as a spirit of mutual love among Christians, to reconcile them to one another.*

Not mere peace is to be aimed at, but free, mutual, Christian communion. As peace between nations infers commerce, so among Christian Churches it ought to infer a fellowship in acts of worship.

If these, and such like things, take no place with us, then have we cause to apprehend that "the things of our peace are yet hid from our eyes."

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

Bristol.

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Variations on Themes from Scripture.

No. XXVI.

Subject: PERSONAL BELIEF.

"And many more believed because of His own word; and said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."—John iv. 41, 42.

§ 1.

IF many of the Samaritans of Sychar believed on Jesus for the saying of the woman, which testified, "He told me all that ever I did," there were many more who, when once they came to know Him, believed because of His own word. And these said unto the woman, "Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." The belief was personal now, individual; not at second-hand, or traditional: and only a personal belief, at first hand, is in such a case, availing. Let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden; and with the burden of belief, stranger intermeddleth not.

"The creed that must thy mind control
Can all things be, except the creed
Of any other human soul."

A man can believe, and make his own in the most genuine way, says Mr. Carlyle, what he has received from another ; and with boundless gratitude to that other. "The merit of *originality* is not novelty ; it is sincerity. The believing man is the original man ; whatsoever he believes, he believes it for himself, not for another." Every son of Adam, we are admonished, can become a sincere man, an original man, in this sense. That a man be self-subsistent, original, true, is surely the farthest in the world from indisposing him to reverence and believe other men's truth. "It only disposes, necessarily and invincibly compels him to *disbelieve* other men's dead formulas, hearsays, and untruths." Liberty of judgment ? rings the note of interrogation on another page : no iron chain, or outward force of any kind, could ever compel the soul of a man to believe or to disbelieve. "It is his own indefeasible right, that judgment of his ; he will reign, and believe there, by the grace of God alone." In a later work the same home-striking, hard hitter affirms, that a poor man who would save his soul alive is reduced to the sad necessity of sharply trying his gods whether they are Divine or not ; which is a terrible pass for mankind, and lays an awful problem upon each man. The man must do it, however. "At his own peril he will have to do this problem too, which is one of the awfulest ; and his neighbours, all but a select portion of them, portion generally *not* clad in official tiaras, can be of next to no help to him in it, nay, rather will infinitely hinder him in it, as matters go." To cherish pious thoughts, and assiduously keep your eye directed to heaven, that is not real ; will that, he asks, yield Divine life to you, or hideous galvanic life in death ? To cherish many quasi-human virtues, and wed them all to the principle that God can be served by believing what is not true ; to put out the sacred lamp of intellect within you ; to decide on maiming yourself of that higher Godlike gift, which God Himself has given you, with a silent but awful charge in regard to it : all this is surely the reverse of nobleness and human courage.* *Et quoi qu'on veuille dire, et quoi qu'il ose*

* "The singular gospel or revelation of God's will ! That to please

croire, as the Spanish sovereign words it in Corneille—What another wills to say and dares to believe, is his concern, not mine; and, if he is saved by it, his salvation, not mine. To apply, in qualified sense, a stanza of Owen Meredith's:—

“Alas! 'tis not the creed that saves the man:
It is the man that justifies the creed:
And each must save his own soul as he can,
Since each is burdened with a different need.”

If others in the same glass better see, writes Dryden, in the *Religio Laici*—

“'Tis for themselves they look, but not for me;
For my salvation must its doom receive,
Not from what others, but what I believe.”

If, says Milton, a man believes things only because his pastor says so, or the assembly so determines, without knowing other reason, though his belief be true, “yet the very truth he holds becomes his heresy.”* Let every man be fully

the Supreme Fountain of Truth your readiest method, now and then, was to persist in believing what your whole soul found to be doubtful or incredible.”—*Latter-Day Pamphlet on “Jesuitism.”*

* *Areopagitica*. Compare a remark by the author of *Nugæ Criticæ* on some men in this world, who seem to be not responsible for their perversity, so bad has been their bringing up; who cannot see otherwise than they do, their minds having been set in a certain rut, and their errors therefore, and so far honest. “If such men, obeying selfish or prudential motives, were to profess absolutely true opinions, they would profess opinions which, in so far as they are concerned, would be positively false.”

When doctors differ—*ça va sans dire*. The Reverend Doctor and the Medical Doctor, in *Elsie Venner*, dispute the allowances to be made for idiosyncrasies in regard to personal belief, or the want of it—“*As if*,” exclaims the M.D., “belief did not depend very much on race and constitution, to say nothing of early training.” “Do you mean to say,” demands the D.D., “that every man is not absolutely free to choose his beliefs?” “The men you write about in your studies are,” the physician replies, “but not the men in the real world. There is some apparently congenital defect in the Indians, for instance, that keeps them from choosing civilization and Christianity. So with the gipsies, very likely. . . . Constitution has more to do with belief than people think.”

It has been shrewdly said that the reasons why men entertain opinions are hardly ever identical with the reasons upon which they defend them. A man believes in a religious or political creed because he has been

persuaded in his own mind. The belief of the whole world, as a commentator on that text avers, cannot make this thing true to me which seems false; any more than the conscience of the whole world can make a thing right to me, if in my heart I believe it wrong. "You may coerce the conscience, you may control men's belief, and you may produce a unity by so doing; but it is the unity of pebbles on the sea-shore—a lifeless identity of outward form with no cohesion between the parts—a dead sea-beach on which nothing grows, and where the very sea-weed dies." Heaven deals with us on no representative system, says a Transatlantic essayist—"Souls are not saved in bundles. The Spirit saith to the man, 'How is it with thee? Thee, personally? Is it well? Is it ill?'" It may be prudent in me to act sometimes by other men's reasons; but I can think only by my own:—that is one of Swift's thoughts on religion. Another is:—"If another man's reason fully convinces me, it becomes my own reason." And a third:—"To say a man is bound to believe, is neither truth nor sense." According to Locke, we may as rationally hope to see with other men's eyes, as to know by other men's understandings. So much as we ourselves comprehend of truth and reason, so much we possess of real and true knowledge. "The floating of other men's opinions in our brains makes us not one jot the more knowing, though they happen to be true." Even those who most shrink from the conclusions of Spinoza can scarcely avoid some admiring interest in the fact that he refused to accept the belief of another man, but would believe for himself; that seeing mysteries around him, awful, inexplicable, he would accept of no man's explanation; but, God having given him a soul, with that he would solve the problem, or remain without a solution. Man, after all, muses the Caxtonian essayist, must think for himself, or he does not complete his own intellectual existence—he does but reflect another man's.

brought up in it, because it suits his character, because his friends believe in it, because he is brave, because he is timid, or for "a thousand other reasons which it is impossible to specify, and of which he himself is not aware." But these, adds the anonymous author of a tractate on "Consistency," are not the grounds on which he defends his belief.

The Preacher's Dissecting Room ;

OR,

PEN PORTRAITS OF REPRESENTATIVE PREACHERS.

"WITHOUT A PARABLE SPAKE HE NOT UNTO THEM."

Complaints against the modern pulpits are rife alike in social circles and literary productions. Whilst many of them are characterized by flippant ignorance and sceptical rancour, others are marked both by good judgment and holy feeling. The purpose of these Sketches is the improvement of the pulpit. Nothing would the writer deprecate more than to wound the heart or get the finger of ridicule pointed at any honest-hearted preacher of Christ; hence he has clad his characters and circumstances with a fictitious vesture—like the Great Teacher, he has spoken in parables. We shall examine representative preachers of the three great prevailing schools—the SENSATIONAL, including (1.) the tragic; (2.) the comic; (3.) the rhapsodic. The INTELLECTUAL, including (1.) the technical; (2.) the grandiloquent; (3.) the philosophic. The SPIRITUAL, including (1.) the mystical; (2.) the intuitional; (3.) the eclectic.

No. I.

THE TRAGIC PREACHER.

THE tragical preacher is one of the leading members of the *sensational* school. We have often heard him: we enjoyed him in our boyhood, though we cannot tolerate him now. As we know him well, we can describe him to our readers. Corporeally, he is distinguished by his bilious temperament, coarse features, and gaunt gait. His forehead recedes, his eyes are deep set and dull, his lips, though too thick and fleshy to quiver with the tender, can thunder the terrible. His theology is generally, not always, of the Calvinian type, sadly perverted, very sensuous, and intensely selfish. He judges everything after the flesh; he weighs all in the scale of expediency. To avoid the everlasting burnings of a material hell, and to get into a paradise of endless enjoyment, is to him the grand end of existence. His deity is as savage and ruthless as the bloody Kali of the Hindoos. The home of his soul is amidst the thunders, lightnings, and earthquakes of Sinai. He has never climbed the mount of beatitudes. The air that Jesus breathed has never fanned his lungs, nor has he ever bathed his soul in the sunshine of disinterested love. He is found in all Christian communities, in the Church of England as well as amongst Dissenters. He sometimes finds his way into our pulpits through our universities, and sometimes rough and rude he comes from coal-pits and shops. The last time we heard him was in a church where he took for his text the passage, "For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared: he hath made it deep

and large; the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it." There was no exposition of the text or the context. His instinct for the awful led him to the selection of the words, and into the awful he launched with all the passions of his heart, and members of his body too; for all his limbs were brought into strenuous action. The following is an extract from his discourse:—

"As there are no joys to the joys of heaven, so there are no pains to the pains of hell. All the cruelties of the world cannot possibly make up any horror comparable to the horrors of hell. The brick-kilns of Egypt, the furnace of Babel, are but as the glowing sparkle, or as the blaze of a brush-faggot, to this tormenting. Tophet thus has been prepared of old to punish the bodies and souls of sinners with. Hanging, racking, burning, scourging, stoning, sawing asunder, flaying of the skin, &c., are not to be named in the day wherein the tortures of hell are spoken of. If all the pains, sorrows, miseries, and calamities that have been inflicted upon all the sons of men, since Adam fell in Paradise, should meet together and centre in one man, they would not so much as amount to one of the least of the pains of hell. Who can sum up the diversity of torments that are in hell! In hell there is darkness; hell is a dark region. In hell there are sorrows. In hell there are bonds and chains. In hell there are pains and pangs. In hell there is the worm that never dies. In hell there is a lake of fire. In hell there is a furnace of fire. In hell there is the devil and his angels: and oh, how dreadful must it be to be shut up for ever with those roaring lions! In hell there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Certainly, did men believe the torments of hell, that weeping for extremity of heat, and that gnashing of teeth that there is for extremity of cold, they would never offer to fetch profits or pleasures out of those flames. In hell there is unquenchable fire. 'He will burn the chaff with unquenchable fire.' In hell there is everlasting burnings. 'The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?' Wicked men, who are now the only jolly fellows of the time, shall one day go from burning to burning—from burning in sin to burning in hell—from burning in flames of lusts to burning in flames of torment, except there be found true repentance on their sides, and pardoning grace on God's. As in heaven there shall be all bodily perfections, so there shall also be in hell all bodily miseries. Whatsoever may make a man perfectly miserable shall be in hell; therefore, the wrath of God, and all the positive effects of this wrath, is here meant by fire. The least punishment in hell is more grievous than if a child-bearing woman should continue in the most violent pangs and throes a thousand years together, without the least ease or intermission. If all the men which have been from Adam's time till this day, and which shall be to the end of the world, and all the piles of grass in the world were turned into so many men to augment the number, and that punishment inflicted in hell upon any one were to be divided amongst all these, so as to every one might befall an equal part of that punishment, yet that which would be the portion of one man would be far more grievous than all the cruel deaths and exquisite tortures which have been inflicted upon men ever since the world began."

The delivery of this horrific passage, which is now in print on our table before us, seemed rather a delight than a grief to the speaker; there was no wail of pity in the tones, no look of compassion in the eye. On the contrary, the voice was as destitute of pathos as the metallic shriek of the locomotive. Of action, he had abundance; he threw his body into every conceivable attitude, now on one side, and now on the other, now bending over the pulpit, now standing erect as if aghast with alarm. His voice rose to thunder and his words came out like a cataract of fire. The congregation was immensely large, and although composed of various social classes, were all manifestly of one mental type—sensuous and thoughtless, lovers of excitement. They seemed entranced, they sniffed the sulphur as a delicious aroma; the imaginary wails of the damned seemed as strains of music to their ears. After the sermon the preacher gave out the well-known hymn of Dr. Watts,

“My soul, on awful subjects roll,
 Damnation and the dead.
What horrors seize the guilty soul
 When on a dying bed;
Lingering about those mortal shores
 She makes a long delay,
Till like a flood with rapid force,
 Death sweeps the wretch away.”

This hymn the vast congregation seemed to sing with ineffable gratification.

Three men, on returning home from Church that night, entered into conversation concerning the discourse. Their names were MacLean, Brooks, and Spencer. The first was a constant member of the congregation and a great admirer of the preacher; the second was an unsophisticated countryman, not accustomed to Church-going; the third was an intelligent artizan, free from all theological predilection, yet earnestly in quest for a spiritual something to satisfy the craving of his soul.

MacLean started the conversation by saying, “What a glorious sermon we have had to-night! with what freedom, power, and unction the minister delivered his message.”

“I am not much of a judge of sermons,” said Brooks, in reply, “I don’t often hear preachers; the fact is, I don’t much like them, and I don’t think I shall like them the more for what I have heard to-night. The sermon can’t be true, that’s my opinion: I can’t tell why, but I feel that it is an exaggeration.”

“Brooks,” said MacLean, “I am astonished to hear ye;

why, my minister is one of the most popular Avangelical preachers."

"Well," said Brooks, "I don't care what he is, or to what Church he belongs, but I don't like him. It can't be true." "What do you think of the sermon, Spencer?" continued Brooks.

"Think of it! Why it is too hideous a blasphemy to think about. I feel it to be a libel on the author of my nature, whoever he might be."

"Hush, mon!" said MacLean. "Don't be profane. Ye dinna ken the meaning' of speerateal things. The kearnal mind deearneth not the things of the speret. What ye h'ard to-night was soond Scootch theology."

"Be it so," said Spencer; "it would not suit me. Six days of the week I labour hard for the necessary things of this life, and on the Sunday I don't want my feelings harrowed, and all my notions of a Deity outraged. The God my nature thirsts after is One on whom I can place my strongest love and rest my firmest confidence; but the God the preacher revealed to us to-night I recoil from as a monster. If I believed in what he said, I should become utterly unfit to attend to the duties, or enjoy the blessings of life, even for a day. I should howl out my existence, set my mouth against the heavens, and madly roar anathemas at the Juggernaut of the universe."

Here they came to a point where they separated. Each took his way to his own house; Spencer, on parting, intimating that he intended on the following Sunday hearing a preacher of a different type. His friend, Arnold, a most intelligent man who, like himself, was in quest of a true religious teacher, wished him to go with him.

Now I confess that I share largely in the views and feelings of Spencer in relation to the sermon of this tragic preacher. It gave a wrong view of the doctrine of retribution. Retribution is an eternal fact in the moral universe. Suffering must ever follow sin. This is not only just, but benevolent Love demands it. The woes of the Bible are the wails of love. But this sermon was a defamation of the Divine character; a calumny on Him who, according to the testimony of His own Son, is LOVE, and all-loving. It debases the human soul by making it the victim of selfish anxieties and superstitious fears. The spirit of man, which God intended to be brave and buoyant in the universe, it reduces to a cringing serf. It is true that such preaching will draw crowds together of the grosser and maligner types of human nature, may unite them into any organized community which is called a "Church," but such a

Church is no more like the Church of Christ than the crawling reptile to the soaring eagle. It is merely a community of men whose fears have been awakened, and whose selfishness has been intensified. Such Churches are amongst the chief curses of the race. The true Church is a community of men who have not received the "spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and a sound mind."

EPISCOPUS.

Biblical Criticism.

וְאֵנִי יָדַעְתִּי נִפְלִי הֵן לְאַחֲרָיוֹן עַל-עֶפֶר יָקוּם: וְאַחֲרָיוֹן
נִקְפֵּי-זָאֵחַ וְיִמְבְּשׁוּנִי אֲחֻזָּה אֱלֹהִים: אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי אֲחֻזָּה-לִי וְעֵינַי רָאוּ
וְלֹא-אֶזְכֹּר כָּל־יִתְנִן בְּחֻקֵּי: Job xix. 25-27.—

THE entire passage runs thus:—"Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine own eyes shall behold, and not another; *though* my reins be consumed within me."

Now as thus rendered, the text teaches:—1. The Divinity of Christ; 2. His office and work as the Redeemer; 3. His then future advent into the world; and 4. The resurrection from the dead as finally resultant thereupon. But before we can arrive at these issues with certainty, we must of course be sure that our Authorized Version has rendered the sense of the original with all necessary fidelity—we say, with all necessary fidelity, because a strictly verbal translation is by no means essential to such a result. We think that substantially the rendering of the Authorized Version is correct. That, however, it is faithful to the very letter of the original, is more than we are prepared to affirm.

Let us then examine the text a little more closely, and see what is the precise meaning of the original, and whether or not, when the meaning has been thus precisely determined, the above named doctrinal inferences stand justified. And in so doing, we cannot perhaps do better than follow the textual order clause by clause.

First clause (v. 25):—אֲנִי יָדָעְתִּי וְיֹדְעִי אֲנִי—*vă-ănî yādhātî gōālî hhāy*. This, when strictly and literally rendered, is—*For I know my living Redeemer*. אֲנִי *ănî* = pron. *I*, is emphatic. *I* (whatever you my professed friends may think) *know*, &c. Further, י in אֲנִי *vă-ănî* is correctly rendered in the Authorized Version by “for.” Heiligstedt maintains erroneously that it has here an adversative force (*vim adversativam*), and is to be translated by *tamen* = *yet*, and that therefore the sentiment here (vv. 25-27) introduced is in contrasted relation with the exclamatory wishes expressed in verses 23-24. He thus explains the clause:—“*tamen* (non demum post mortem meam, sed) jam antequam moriar, jus meum adipiscar, nam scio vindicem meum existare cet.”* Suffice it to say, however, that י, י is properly and usually *copulative* (Gesen. Heb. Gramm. Pt. III. § 152 a), and that there is no reason whatever for assigning to it in the case before us any other than a strictly copulative signification. The verses 23-27 form one complete paragraph—one organic whole; and we are warranted in looking to the 25-27 verses for the momentous truths, to which, by the remarkable exordium contained in the verses 23-25, our attention has been specially invited. To suppose that immediately after the utterance of the exclamations of the 23rd and 24th verses, the patriarch’s mind suddenly collapsed and his hopes broke down, and that in consequence the scarcely less remarkable sentiments found in the 25-27 verses, are not to be connected with, but disconnected from, the said exclamatory expressions of the 23-25 verses, is not criticism, but mere trifling.

* *Commentarius Grammaticus Historicus Criticus in Jobum scripsit Aug. Heiligstedt, Ph.D. Vide Maureri Comm. Gramm. Histor. Crit. in Vet. Testamentum, Vol. IV. Lipsiae, 1847, p. 134.*

יְיָ אֱלֹהֵי—*gōālî khāy* is an expression exactly analogous to the oft recurring יְיָ אֱלֹהֵי—*'el khāy* = *the living God* (Psa. xlii. 2 ; lxxxiv. 2), and would seem to suggest that *the living Redeemer*, like *the living God*, “had life in Himself.” Hence the rendering of Dr. Pye Smith and of Dr. Henderson—“my Redeemer, the LIVING ONE,” is also equally admissible. The expression points to the Redeemer as being in nature *Divine*,—*the fountain of life*. Here the Authorized Version is, unquestionably, somewhat feeble. Supposing for a moment that the patriarch purposed to speak of the resurrection, how apt and beautiful is the expression applied by him to his Redeemer, who was to thus become to him “the resurrection and the life.” Who so fit as the LIVING ONE to recal him hereafter from the tomb and to give him back his fleshly body reconstituted into fitness for the presence of God ?

There is further no doubt that גֹּאֵל *gōēl* is rightly translated *redeemer*. We have no reason to suppose that the Mosaic concept of the office and duty of the *Goēl* differed in any essential from the concept thereof which prevailed in patriarchal times, and therefore for all practical purposes, the Mosaic description is sufficient to show us in what sense or senses the term is here employed by the patriarch. 1. The *Goēl* was presumed to be the near kinsman of the person or persons, in whose behalf he undertook to act. 2. It was his duty *cognationis et jure et officio*, to avenge his slain kinsman's blood (Numb. xxxv. 19 ; Deut. xix. 6, 12). 3. To redeem his kinsman's inheritance, in case it had been sold away in whole or in part (Lev. xxv. 25 ; Ruth iv. 3, 6). 4. To deliver his kinsman by ransom or by force out of captivity. 5. To advocate the right of those of his near kindred (as of females), who were too weak to defend their own cause. The applicability of this description to the great work of the Messiah is self-evident ; and that Job referred only to the Messiah is manifest abundantly from the context. Even those commentators, who, like Heiligstedt, Maurer, Barnes, &c., maintain that the passage points only to secular deliverance and prosperity, allow that by his redeemer the patriarch meant none other than God Himself.

Second clause (v. 25):—**וְאַחֲרָיו עַל-עָפָר יָקֻם**—*və-āhhārōn 'āl-āphār yāqūm*.—This rendered literally is—*and hereafter he shall arise upon the dust*. The Authorized Version has—“and he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.” Now it has been objected that **אַחֲרָיו** *āhhārōn* does not bear out the precise signification—*at the latter day*, or as Jerome has it, “in novissimo die,”—since there is nothing in the original corresponding to the word “day.” Whether, however, the objection is worth much or not, admits of reasonable doubt. The rendering of Jerome, copied by our translators, might by itself carry but little authority; but a similar rendering of **אַחֲרָיו** is found in the Chaldee and Syriac. The latter translates it by **ܐܝܢ ܕܥܡܪܐ** *besupho*, *in the end*, or *in the consummation*, which for all practical purposes is one and the same thing with *the latter day*. Heiligstedt once over renders it by *postremum*, and Dr. Mason Goode by *at last*. Some interpreters again treat **אַחֲרָיו** as being in opposition to **בְּאַחֲרָיו**, and Heiligstedt seems inclined to adopt this view, and to make this word the nominative to **יָקֻם** *yāqūm*. As thus viewed, he and Maurer translate it by *postremus*. Drs. Pye Smith and Lindsay Alexander adopt the same view, and render it by *he, the last*. But pretty nearly the same objection applies to this rendering, which is also applied to that of our Authorized Version. It is said that **אַחֲרָיו** never means the *last* except when in contrast with **רִשְׁוֹן** *rishōn* the first, or with something in the immediate context limiting it to the remotest future. “The term,” observes the late Prof. Dr. Henderson, D.D., Ph.D., “is simply expressive of futurity, without conveying the idea of early or late in regard to the exact period of that futurity.” If, therefore, it may be translated *the last*, it may be also translated by *at the latter day*, and preferably so. The translation, which, however, is least open to cavil, is that which leaves the point of futurity undetermined, although the context makes it pretty clear that the particular time contemplated by the patriarch was that of the last day, when the resurrection should be consummated. If we translate by *hereafter*—the rendering least open to objection—the mind

still reaches forward in thought to "the latter day" of our Authorized Version. It is here therefore true to the sense, if not to the letter of the original. Luther translates by *hernach*. Bishop Harold Browne, Dr. Henderson, Barnes, and others, translate by *hereafter*.

DR. CLARKE.

(To be continued.)



The Preacher's Finger-Post.

A PORTRAIT OF THE TRUE SERVANT OF GOD.

"Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord."—Jeremiah i. 6-8.

I. HE IS CALLED TO A GREAT WORK. "For thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee."

First: He is a *Divine messenger*. He goes forth on an errand from God.

Secondly: He is a Divine messenger to go *only where God sends him*. "Thou shalt go only where I send thee;" nowhere else; so far and no farther.

Thirdly: He is a Divine messenger, to speak only what *God communicates*. "Whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak." He is not to speak his own speculations, or the theology of others, but the Word of God.

II. HE IS CONSCIOUS OF SELF-

INSUFFICIENCY. "Ah, Lord God, I cannot speak, for behold, I am a child." The prophet felt himself utterly unqualified, intellectually and morally, for such a work. He felt himself to be "a child" in weakness and inexperience. This conscious self-insufficiency—

First: Is the *characteristic* of all true servants—Moses had it; Isaiah had it; Paul had it. "Who is sufficient for these things?"

Secondly: Is a *qualification* of all true servants. It is only as a man feels himself utterly weak for Divine work that he becomes strong to discharge it. "When I am weak, then am I strong." God does not work with a self-sufficient man.

III. HE IS STRENGTHENED BY THE DIVINE. "Be not afraid of their faces, for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord." A man who has God within need never be afraid. "If God be for us, who can be against

us." The Lord stood by me, said Paul.

CONCLUSION.—Who amongst us are the true servants of God?

THE WORK OF THE EVANGEL.

"Blessed are they that sow beside all waters."—Isa. xxxii. 20.

I. It is a *sowing* work. Of all mere human works, this is (1.) The most *Divine*. The seed, the soil, are all of God. (2.) The most *righteous*. Statesmen, merchants, warriors, may question the rectitude of their work, but the agriculturist has no reason to doubt. (3.) The most *useful*. The farmer feeds the world. Husbandry supplies the tables alike of beggars and of kings. (4.) The most *believing*. The man who commits the precious grain to the earth has strong faith in the laws of nature.

II. It is a *BLESSED* work. "Blessed is he." (1.) He is blessed by the gratitude of society. All are indebted to his services. (2.) He is blessed with the approval of his own conscience. He feels that in sowing he is doing his duty. He is blessed by the smiles of his God.

III. It is an *UNRESTRICTED* work. "All waters." The meaning is, all well-watered places. The word "besides" would be better translated "upon." Scatter seed upon all suitable spots. The evangel has unlimited scope for his

operations. His field of labour is the world, and he is commanded to be instant in season and out of season.

CONCLUSION.—We have in our hand the bread—seed of the world. Let us scatter it unsparingly, and constantly, trusting to Him to give it life and make it grow.

PLEASING GOD.

"Ye ought to walk and please God."—1 Thess. iv. 1.

I. *THIS* work is *POSSIBLE* to man. This is wonderful. It is wonderful that a creature so small as man should be able to please the Infinite. Still more wonderful that a creature so *sinful* as man should be able to please the absolutely Holy One. Yet it is so. We learn this (1.) From the moral affinity of God. Moral beings are always pleased with those things that are agreeable with their own tendencies, sympathies, and aims. And God is pleased when He sees in His human creature the development of things in accord with His own pure nature. (2.) From the paternal relation of God. Parents are always pleased with the love, the obedience, the good of their children. Much more so the Infinite Father. (3.) From the testimony of God. God has given His testimony that man has pleased Him. Enoch had this testimony; so had Noah, David, Daniel, &c. How great, though insignifi-

cant, is man. He can please the Infinite and the Holy.

II. This work is INCUMBENT on man. "Ye ought to walk." And first (1.) Gratitude binds him to this. How infinitely good God has been to man. Ought he not to please his benefactor? (2.) Self-love binds him to this. It is only by pleasing God that he can really secure the

true interests of his own being. Though man ought not to make his own happiness the end of action, yet he has no right to sacrifice his own interests. These can only be secured by pleasing God. (3.) Philanthropy binds him to this. It is only by pleasing God that he can really and effectively serve his fellow-men.



Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. CCLXXXIX.)

Subject: MAN'S HEART.

"My son, give me thine heart."—Prov. xxiii. 26.

"HEART" here, of course, does not mean the bunch of muscles that beats the blood through the veins, nor does it mean merely the emotional part of human nature, the fountain of our affections and sympathies. It means the rational nature that distinguishes us from the brutes. It is the inner man, the man of the man. The text leads us to make two remarks concerning this heart:—

I. IT IS A PROPERTY THAT MAN HAS TO DISPOSE OF. This is implied in the expression "Give me thine heart."

First: *Man has nothing higher to dispose of.* A man's heart is given when he sets his strongest affections upon an object. In the object on which he centres his strongest love his heart is,

and where his heart is *he* is. Locally the object may be as far as the antipodes, as far as the heavens are from the earth. Still the man is there, though his body may be confined to some small spot on earth. It is characteristic of the human creature that he can live two lives—the animal down amongst vegetation, &c., and the spiritual in the object of his love, wherever it may be. The man, therefore, that gives his heart, gives more than if he gave all his worldly possessions—gave a kingdom. He gives himself.

Secondly: *Man is compelled to dispose of it.* He is compelled, not by any outward coercion, but by an inward pressure, by the cravings of his nature. It is as necessary for the soul to love as it is for the body to breathe. The deepest of all the deep hungers of humanity is the hunger in the heart to love. Sometimes so ravenous does

man's animal appetite for food become, that he will devour with a kind of relish the most loathsome things; and so voracious is the heart for some object to love, that it will settle down upon the lowest and most contemptible creatures rather than not love at all.

Thirdly: *He alone can dispose of it.* No one can take it from him by force. If he had no power over his affections he would be at the mercy of circumstances. He would not be a free man in the universe, but a slave. He would be an engine driven by force, not a free agent, responsible to moral law. And although the Everlasting One has a right to his heart, requires his heart, and asks him to give it, He will not wrest it from him.

II. IT IS A PROPERTY THAT IS URGENTLY CLAIMED. There are many who claim it.* A thousand objects surround man, especially in his youthful stages, asking him for his heart. Alas! without experience, and without thought, he yields to the request, and is a ruined man.

There is only one object in the universe to whom it should be given—that is the Supremely Good.

First: *He alone has a right to it.* All souls are His. He endowed them with its fathomless susceptibilities and amazing powers. He who gives his heart to anyone else is guilty of the most astounding robbery. He robs his Maker.

Secondly: *He alone can develop it.* So constituted is the human soul, that there is no possibility of having all its

powers quickened and unfolded without supreme love to God. What the sunbeam is to the earth, love to God is to the soul, that without which the earth would be barren and beautiful for ever.

Thirdly; *He alone can satisfy it.* "You might as soon," says an old writer, "fill a bag with wisdom and a chest with virtue, or a circle with a triangle, as the heart of man without God. A man may have enough of the world to sink in, but he can never have enough to satisfy him."

CONCLUSION. How rational, how morally befitting, how sublimely simple, is genuine religion! "My son, give me thine heart." Sir Walter Raleigh, who was atrociously sacrificed by the impious James the First, and condemned to be beheaded, on a false charge of treason, in reply to the executioner, who asked him which way he should lay his head, said, "So the heart be right, it is no matter which way the head lies."

(No. CCXC.)

Subject: THE DRUNKARD'S EFFIGY HUNG UP AS A BEACON.

"Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine." Prov. xxiii. 29.

WE have already dealt with a passage treating the same revolting subject as this. (Prov. xx. 1.)* All that we shall do here will be to present the rough outlines of the drunkard's picture. There are several things to be observed.

* For Illustration, see "Pulpit and its Handmaids," page 59.

* See *Homilist in loco*.

I. HIS SENSUAL INDULGENCE.

He is one of those that "tarry long at the wine, that go to seek mixed wine." It is clear from this and other passages that the wines used in Judea in ancient times were intoxicating, although, perhaps, by no means to the extent of modern wines, which are brandied and drugged. What are called foreign wines in the English markets are, to a great extent, we are told, home manufactures. The drunkard is not one who sips the juice of the grape as God gives it, for his refreshment, and then passes on to his work, but he is one who "tarries long at the wine." He seeks pleasure out of it. He pursues it as a source of enjoyment. He has "mixed" and flavoured it, that it may become more exciting to his brain, more delicious to his taste. What a picture of thousands in this so-called Christian country, who periodically assemble every day in these taverns, hotels, and clubs, in order to tarry long at the intoxicating beverages!

II. HIS OFFENSIVE GARRULOUSNESS.

"Who hath contentions? Who hath babbling?" When alcohol excites the brain, that member of the body which James describes as "setting on fire the whole course of nature," is allowed to give full utterance to all the filthy, incoherent, ill-natured and ridiculous things that spring from the drunkard's heart. In these babblings there may sometimes be some genial and humorous expressions, but often the ill-natured and irritating "contentions." What quarrels, fightings, and murders have grown out of the drunkard's babblings! These

babblings supply our police with labour, our judges with occupation, our workhouses with paupers, our jails with prisoners, our gallows with victims.

III. HIS BLOODSHOT FACE.

"Who hath redness of eyes?" The habits of the man come to be marked by their effects upon his looks. The inflamed and turgid eye, and the blotched and fiery and disfigured countenance, indicate that the deleterious poison has gone through his frame, and has incorporated with, and tainted, and set on fire the entire mass of circulating blood. His very looks become the index of his character, and give warning to all who look at him to have nothing to do with him.

IV. HIS WRETCHED CONDITION. "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow?" It seems implied the drunkard gets into a wretchedness for which no equal can be found. "At the last," the text also says of this drunkard, "it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." Is there any woe worse than the drunkard's woe? He has the woe of ill health. Drunkenness poisons the blood, saps the constitution, and generates disease. There is the woe of secular poverty. Drunkenness indisposes and unfits a man for those duties by which a subsistence for himself and family can be obtained. The pauperism of England has its chief fountain in drunkenness. There is the woe of social disrespect. Who can respect the drunkard? Not his neighbours—not even his wife and children. They soon get to loathe and shun him. There is the woe of remorse. In his sober moments, if his con-

science is not seared, remorse creeps into him like a serpent, bites and stings him into anguish. Truly a wretched creature is the drunkard.

V. HIS EASY TEMPTABILITY. "Thine eyes shall behold strange women." The idea suggested is, that a man under the influence of inebriating drinks is easily tempted. For the crimes of adultery or blasphemy he is ready. The judgment is clouded. All sense of propriety is gone; the passions are inflamed. The breath of temptation will bear him away into sin. The drunken man stands, or rather reels, ready for any crime. There is a fable of a man, no doubt, familiar to many of you—but though a fable it involves an important truth and an important warning—of the man to whom the devil is said to have offered the alternative of a choice between *three sins*, one or other of which, as the means of averting some evil or obtaining some good, he was bound to commit. The three sins were—*murder, incest, and drunkenness*. The man made choice of the last, as, in his estimation, incomparably the least. This was the devil's device; for, when he was under the influence of it, he was easily beguiled into both the other two. It is needless to say how insensible the drunkard becomes to all feelings of delicacy and decorum; how he is ready to commit the most shameless indecencies and glory in his shame; and how rapidly, in such a state, he becomes the prey—the wretched and dishonourable prey—of every vile seducer.

VI. HIS RECKLESS STUPIDITY. "Thou shalt be as he

that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast." Exhausted by excitement, and blinded by the fumes of his disordered stomach and intoxicated brain, he falls to sleep. He is unconscious of the spot on which he lies down. It may be near a raging fire or on the margin of a terrible precipice; it may be as dangerous as if he laid himself down in the midst of the raging sea, or on the top of a mast tossed by the wild winds of heaven. He is utterly dead to all the surroundings of his terrible position. When his nature has overcome the power of the poison within him, and the mists roll from his brain and his senses return, and he opens his eyes, he is startled at the terribleness of his position, and it appears to him as awful as if he had been in the midst of the sea, or on the mast-head of a storm-tossed bark. What a condition for a rational being to be in! and yet it is the condition into which the drunkard sinks in his miserable debauch! When he has awoke he knows nothing of what has occurred during the period of his intoxication. He knows not how he had come to that terrible spot. He finds himself stricken, but he knows not by whom—beaten, he knows not the hand. He has wounds "without a cause"—that is, he knows not the cause. Struggling into consciousness, yawning with an intolerable depression, he is unable to account for the injuries that have been inflicted upon his person.

VII. HIS UNCONQUERABLE THIRST. "When shall I awake? I will seek it yet again." How-

ever bitter his reflections upon his awaking, and his remorse, on his awaking his burning thirst remains unquenched. He seeks relief in that very cup which has thus far damned him. "As a dog to his vomit he returns to his filth."

CONCLUSION. Young men, look at this terrible effigy! It is here raised on the eternal Rock of Truth, to warn every mariner of his dangers on the sea of life. "Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its colour to the cup, when it moveth itself aright." Let not the hue or the sparkle attract you. Avoid it as you would poison.*

(No. CCXCI.)

Subject: THE VILLAINY AND ABSURDITY OF SIN.

"Be not thou envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them."—Prov. xxiv. 1.

THESE words lead us to make a remark on two points—

I. THE VILLAINY OF SIN. Here is a description of sinners:—"Their heart studieth destruction, and their lips talk of mischief." Malignity is the very essence of sin. All sinners are of their father, the devil.

First: *Their "study" is destruction.* Destroy what? chastity, truth, moral sensibility, spiritual goodness, &c. Every wicked man in his measure is an Apollyon; like his great leader he goes about seeking whom he may devour.

Secondly: *Their speech is mischief.* Their conversation

tends to destroy social order, to create social brawls, to set man against man, family against family, nation against nation. Sin is a destroyer. This is its instinct. This is its influence. Holy Scripture describes the genius and history of sinners. "Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips." It is said that when Nicephorus Phocas had built a strong wall about his palace for his own security, in the night-time he heard a voice crying to him, "O Emperor! though thou build thy wall as high as the clouds, yet if sin be within, it will overthrow all."

II. THE ABSURDITY OF SIN. "Be thou not envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them." Two things are here implied, showing the absurdity of sin.

First: *That sin envies the most unenviable things.* Envy is essentially a bad passion. The poets imagine that envy dwelt in a dark cave, being pale and lean, looking a-squint, abounding with gall, her teeth black, never rejoicing but in the misfortune of others, ever unquiet, and continually tormenting herself. But this feeling is garbed with absurdity when it is directed to evil men. To envy evil men is to envy those whose natures are charged with the elements of misery, over whom the clouds of God's disfavour rest, and for whom a terrible retribution waits.

Secondly: *That sin desires the most undesirable things.* "Neither desire to be with them." To be in the fellowship of wicked men, to breathe their

* For Illustration, see "Pulpit and its Handmaids," page 59.

foetid breath, to listen to their foul talk and bacchanalian song, to join in their senseless revelries, is in every way a most undesirable thing, and yet, alas! it is desired—desired by the thousands of youth who are rising into manhood.* Sin is a great deceiver, it is always theatrical; it puts on dazzling costumes that attract and charm the uninitiated. We have read of a tree which, like the almond tree, robes itself in blossoms before the foliage appears. Its flowers are a gorgeous ruby, and their splendour attracts to it in teeming crowds the winged insects of the air. The busy bee in quest of nectar is attracted to it, settles down for a moment,

and amidst its encircled beauty drinks its cup and falls dead to the root. Around that tree we are told there lie the remains of myriads of insects who have fallen victims to a fatal delusion. Is not sin like that tree? In the great fields of human society how high it lifts its head, how wide its branches, how brilliant its blossoms! Human souls, fascinated by its external glory, and by its promise of delicious nectar, hasten to it, crowd around it, settle on it, sip its juicy flowers, and fall dead.

CONCLUSION. Beware of sin. Flee from it as Lot from Sodom, and thus escape for your life.

The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

THE SERVICE OF LOVE (*vide* p. 28).—Thou knowest what Jacob felt when he served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her. A Gospel spirit does the same to God—love makes long service short, and hard service easy. Nothing is pain which love does. And this is Gospel obedience. It is faith working by love which refines duty into a grace—the commandments are exalted into privileges—ordinances become happy means of fellowship with God.—ROMAINE.

FAITH AND WORKS.—It was an unhappy division that has been made between faith and works. Though in my intellect I may divide them, just as

in the candle I know there is both light and heat; but yet, put out the candle, and they are both gone; one remains not without the other. So it is betwixt faith and works; nay, in a right conception, *fides est opus*. If I believe a thing because I am commanded, that is *opus*.—SELDEN.

Not that I would ascribe anything to a lazy, speculative, and barren faith, in opposition to that lively and active one which is called by the Apostle *πίστις δι' ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη* (faith operating by love), since I am told by St. James, that the divorce of faith and works is as destructive to religion as that of soul and body is to life; but that I was willing to mind you that

* For Illustration, see "Pulpit and its Handmaids," page 60.

though true faith (which cries, like Rachel, "Give me children, or else I die,") be ever the pregnant mother of good works, yet are not those works the cause, but the effects and signs of God's first love to him (how-ever afterward the children may nurse their parents).

As, though the needles pointing at the poles be, by being an effect, an argument of its having been invigorated by the load-stone, or received the influence from some other magnetic body, yet it is not that respect unto the worth the cause, but the operation, the irons being drawn by the attractive mineral.—BOYLE.

STRIFE FOR THE HEART (*vide* p. 54).—There is such strife for the heart as there was for Moses' body. "Give it me," saith the Lord. "Give it me," saith the tempter. "Give it me," saith the Pope. "Give it me," saith riches. "Give it me," saith pleasure: as though thou must needst give it. Now, here is the choice—whether thou wilt give it to God or the devil. God's heart, or the devil's heart—whose wilt thou be? Thus doth man hang in a balance, like a young virgin which hath many suitors. Some she fancieth for their parentage, some for personage, some for friends, some for wealth, some for wit, some for virtue; and after all, chooseth the worst of all. So the heart hath many suitors besides God; that sometimes she marieth with one, sometimes with another. The world keeps her, the flesh keeps her, the devil keeps her, which have no more interest in her than Herod to his sister, but seek her spoil; like them that marry for riches,

are glad when one dies, that another may come. His suitors are like Absalom, who did not seek the hearts of the people, like David, but stole them with flattery and lies.—HENRY SMITH.

DRINKING (*vide* p. 57).—At an Episcopal Convention, a discussion on temperance brought up the "wine question." An influential clergyman arose, and made a vehement argument in favour of wine. When he had resumed his seat, a layman said, "Mr. Moderator, it is not my purpose in rising, to answer the learned argument you have just listened to. My object is more humble, and, I hope, more practical. I once knew a father, in moderate circumstances, who was at much inconvenience to educate a beloved son at college. Here this son became dissipated; but after he had graduated and returned to his father, the influence acting upon a generous nature actually reformed him. The father was overjoyed at the prospect that his cherished hopes were still to be realized. Several years passed, when the young man, having completed his professional study, and being about to leave his father to establish in business, he was invited to dine with a neighbouring clergyman, distinguished for his hospitality and social qualities. At this dinner wine was introduced and offered to this young man, who refused; pressed upon him, and again refused. This was repeated, and the young man ridiculed; peculiar abstinence. The young man was strong enough to overcome appetite, but he could not resist ridicule. He drank, and fell, and from that moment be-

came a confirmed drunkard, and long since has found a drunkard's grave. Mr. Moderator," continued the old man, with streaming eyes, "I am that father, and it was at the table of the clergyman who has just taken his seat, and my son, I shall never cease to mourn."

CLOYING PLEASURE (*vide* p. 58).—A philosopher in an epistle which he writes to a man from the court of Dionysius, where he was forcibly detained, thus bemoans himself. "We are unhappy, O Antisthenes, beyond measure! and how can we but be unhappy, that are burdened by the tyrant every day with sumptuous feasts, plentiful compositions, precious ornaments, gorgeous apparel? and I knew as soon as I came into this island and city, how unhappy my life would be." This is the nature and common condition of even the most pleasing sensible objects. They first tempt, then please a little, then disappoint, and lastly, vex. The eye that beholds them blasts them quickly, rifles and deflowers their glory, and views them with no more delight at first, than disdain afterwards. Creature enjoyments have a bottom; are soon drained and drawn dry. Hence, there must be frequent diversions: and their pleasures must be sought out, and are chosen, not because they are

better, but because they are new. —JOHN HOWE.

IMPULSIVE SPIRITUAL LIFE (*vide* p. 26).—You may galvanize a paralysed limb, and, by galvanism, may restore the circulation, and so restore life to it; but the galvanism is not the life—it only rouses the dormant powers of life. Galvanism is a certain development of electricity—the same mysterious agent which, in another form, darts to and fro among the clouds of heaven. The life of the limb, on the other hand, consists in its answering the purposes for which it was made—in its habitual subservience to the will, in the power of contracting and relaxing its muscles when the will gives its notice to do so. Now, the professing Christian who is not spiritually alive is a paralysed member of the body of Christ. Impulses from a heavenly agent, the Holy Ghost, are ever and anon sent through the medium of God's ordinances in the body of Christ, and impart a convulsive, fitful motion even to those limbs which are paralysed. It does not, however, follow that the paralysed limbs are restored. In some cases they may be—in some they may not. At all events, the fitful movement of the limb is one thing, its permanent vitality another. —DR. GOULBURN.

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

A COMMENTARY, CRITICAL, EXPERIMENTAL, AND PRACTICAL, ON THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS. By the Revs. ROBERT JAMIESON, D.D., A. R. FAUSSET, A.M., and DAVID BROWN, D.D. Vols. I to VI. Glasgow: William Collins, Sons, and Co. Price £3, 12s.

HERE are six handsome volumes of Biblical exegesis, taking up the whole Scriptures from Genesis to Revelations. Three of them, embracing the Old Testament from Job to Malachi, and the New from the Acts of the Apostles to Revelations, are from the pen of the Rev. A. R. Fausset, of St. Cuthbert's, York. Two, extending from Genesis to Esther inclusive, are the productions of Rev. Dr. Jamieson, of St. Paul's, Glasgow. The other volume, containing an exposition of all the Gospels, is from the pen of Dr. Browne, Professor of Theology, Aberdeen. Whatever may be the difference in the ability of the authors and the merit of their respective works, they all agree in theological sentiment, and are all men of high culture, right Biblical scholarship, and reverence for the Divine Word. They have unitedly produced a Biblical Commentary, which, taken as a whole, is without a rival or a match. Their introductions to the various Books are specially valuable, inasmuch as they deal with the objections which modern rationalism has put forth with great pertinacity and power. In the department of exegesis, each writer, whilst showing himself perfectly acquainted with the interpretation of previous expositors, and with the various emendative renderings of the text expounded, is manifestly independent. They look at facts with their own eyes, they weigh evidence in their own balance. We do not think that another Commentary of this kind will be required, for another generation at least. It has done work which Matthew Henry, Adam Clarke, Scott, and others who have written on the whole Bible have not done—were, for want of materials, unable to do, and, in the circumstances of their age, not required to do. Our young brethren who are looking out for a Commentary, and beginning to furnish their libraries, must not overlook this work. It is in every respect well got up; it is remarkably cheap, and will prove an invaluable aid to every man who is in earnest quest of the real meaning of a text.

OLD TRUTHS IN NEW FORMS: Three Lectures Delivered in the Poultry Chapel, London. By JOSEPH PARKER, D.D. London: Hurren, Poultry Chapel House, Cheapside.

AD CLERUM: ADVICES TO A YOUNG PREACHER. By JOSEPH PARKER, D.D. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

THE CITY TEMPLE: SERMONS PREACHED IN THE POULTRY CHAPEL, LONDON, 1869-70. By JOSEPH PARKER, D.D. Price 6s. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 27 Paternoster Row.

HERE are three works from the pen of Dr. Parker. The first consists of three discourses, the subjects of which are—The Fall of Adam, Eternal Punishment, and the Annihilation of the Soul. Dr. Parker regards the account given of the fall of Adam in Genesis, not as a history, but as a parable. He believes in the fact of the apostasy with all Christian theologians, but he regards the revelation of the fact in Genesis as given not in a literal history, but in an allegorical costume. In this he is not alone. He has many first-class Biblical scholars, sound theologians, and loyal disciples of Christ on his side. Fact is fact, however it may be revealed to us—groaned out by a fiend or chanted by a seraph, chronicled in prosaic literalness or garbed in the costume of fiction. Heaven's chief Teacher might have given a literal history of the condition of good and bad men in the retribution hereafter; but He gave the fact in a parable. Dr. Parker's discourse on Eternal Punishment will carry with it the convictions of every thinking man, be he rationalist or orthodox believer. His disquisition on the Annihilation of the Soul will, perhaps, not prove so conclusive and generally satisfactory. He denies the doctrine of the annihilation of the soul, as advocated by some modern religionists—a doctrine, we confess, from which both our philosophy and our piety revolt. His idea is, that no creature is necessarily immortal, and that the human soul, under the influence of evil, will wear itself out, just as a candle consumes itself by its own flame. As our space will not allow us even to indicate the points wherein we agree and differ from the author, we can merely say that every loyal student of the Bible should procure and peruse these discourses for himself.

AD CLERUM is a volume consisting of a number of articles on preachers and preaching which appeared in the *Pulpit Analyst*. The article which it contains on the HOMILIST, though, on the whole, exceedingly generous and laudatory, has a few unfortunate expressions—expressions in which the more undivine part of the author's nature leaps into the light. He says that our homiletic method is "wanting in variety." Our method has always been to bring out of the Sacred Passage the Divine ideas it contains, and so distribute and discuss them as to commend them to the reason, conscience, and experience of modern men. We should be only too glad to be shown "a more excellent way." We confess that our search in the *Analyst* for a better method has been hitherto utterly in vain. There is no variety of method in getting at truth; it is as fixed as the essence of moral actions, which must be either good or bad.

There is another clause in this book which we cannot forbear quoting—"In my opinion, the time for the completion of the HOMILIST has fully

come. It may now with advantage coalesce with the *Pulpit Analyst*—giving it the prestige of a unique history, and leaving it to supply some omissions which mark the service even of some of the strongest minds." What was this *Pulpit Analyst* at first? With the exception of a few strong articles in the first numbers from the pen of Dr. Parker, such as those contained in the volume before us, it was made up, for the most part, of petty verbal criticisms, frothy sermons, ghastly skeletons, many of them furnished by men whose contributions had been rejected by the *HOMILIST*. This was the thing that was to give "prestige" to the *HOMILIST*, a work which Dr. Parker once characterized "as traversing its own peculiar sphere with a splendour quite enough to dazzle the vision of any rival aspirant." Where is the *Pulpit Analyst* now? Since Dr. Parker has withdrawn from it, it lost the only reason for its existence, and the only power that could sustain it. The *Pulpit Analyst*, we are told, is giving way to the *Preacher's Lantern*. An "Analyst" is a philosopher rendering service to the world; but there are few places but the stable which require a "lantern" in these days of brilliant gas. A sad thing to see a philosopher becoming a *Lantern*! What a metamorphosis! We want preachers' sunbeams, not lanterns.

How many serials of this class have come into existence since the *HOMILIST* came on the stage? Many for the express purpose of running it down the hill of destruction. But they are all gone, and the *HOMILIST* still lives to adjudge their merits and write their epitaphs. "*Vires acquirit eundo.*" This is the testimony of the first preachers of the age—in Germany, Australia, America, as well as England.

"THE CITY TEMPLE" contains forty-one sermons on a great variety of subjects. It is exactly twelve months since we called the attention of our readers to single sermons which are now bound up in this volume. We said in that article that "we never rejoiced more in the rising popularity of any preacher than that of Dr. Parker, in the Poultry Chapel, in the heart of London." This we say *now*—We have heard him preach several times since, each time to a large congregation, and with great power. Last Thursday we were in his church. The place was as well filled as ever, and there was no abatement in the preacher's freshness of thought and power of expressions. We can scarcely conceive of any sermon, in its contents, structure, and delivery, more fitted to lift men's souls from the secularities of time to the spiritualities of eternity—from the immoral to the Divine—than the sermon we heard on that occasion. Dr. Parker is a man of remarkable ability; his intellect and imagination are of a high type—most quick in movement and expert in execution. His nature, as he speaks, flashes scathing irony, sparkles enlivening humour, and gushes with tenderness and compassion. He is decidedly one of the ablest preachers in London. Such a man is sure to have the envy of the inferior men of his own profession. Envy, however, is always a compliment which weak men render to the strong. I say to the little envious brother, "Thou enviest all, but no man envies thee."

HEROES OF HEBREW HISTORY. By SAMUEL WILBERFORCE, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF WINCHESTER. London: Strahan and Co., 56 Ludgate Hill.

A NOTE by the distinguished author says:—"The following sketches, with the exception of 'David the King,' have already appeared in the pages of *Good Words*. They are now republished at the request of many who desire to possess them in a separate form."

The heroes sketched in this volume are Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Samson, Samuel, David, Micaiah, Elijah, and Elisha. Biographic sketches of these men we have in abundance, and, of course, no new information concerning them can be expected. Still, different writers will set them in different lights; and he will set them in the truest and most commanding light, who has the most power of mind, richness of culture, and heroism of heart. A man must have the heroic in him before, in writing, he can do justice to the life of a true hero. The Bishop, in mental power, culture, and oratoric force, is one of the foremost men of the age, and every production of his is valuable. These sketches are admirable. They have all the charm of romance, and all the tenderness of devout sentiment.

THE SPIRITUAL GARLAND, Being Extracts from English Sacred Writers.

Selected by J. G. PILKINGTON, M.A. London: R. D. Dickinson, 92 Farringdon Street.

THIS is one of the choicest productions of the kind. The selections are made from a large variety of sources, and with great taste and judgment. Some of them, not a few, are amongst the finest paragraphs in the religious literature of England. Preachers will find many powerful suggestions, as well as striking illustrations, from this volume. It has a table of contents, an index of texts, a general index, and an index of authors, so that there is no difficulty in finding the subject sought for at once.

CHATTERBOX. Edited by J. ERSKINE CLARKE, M.A. London: W. Gardner, 10 Paternoster Row.

THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE, for 1870. Edited by J. ERSKINE CLARKE. London: W. Gardner.

WE are glad to find that the intelligent and industrious Editor of these two books is still alive, and working without any abatement of energy or skill. His works are incomparably the best of all within our knowledge, for children. The pictures are admirable, equal to anything in the *Graphic* in execution; and as to the subjects, far more interesting and refreshing. The tales are such that children can well understand, and understanding, can scarcely fail to feel their moral. We heartily commend these two books to parents as the very best and handsomest presents they can make to their children.



A HOMILY

ON

The True Minister.

“But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.”—2 Cor. iv. 2.

ST. PAUL here introduces himself as a *true* minister appointed by God. He is led to this assertion in this place by the insinuations of false teachers against his ministerial character, and by the opposition of others (probably of Judaizing members), who had arisen in the Church at Corinth, and who strenuously denied his claim to Apostleship.

Nor, indeed, is this the only time that we find the Apostle thus obliged to defend his ministerial character, and to show his superiority to these false teachers who, having no true claim to that office themselves, tried to found a reputation upon the ruin of that of the Apostle.

These defences, which the Apostle was obliged to make from time to time, and which were the source of great pain to himself, are yet of very great value to us, as they give what St. Paul considered the characteristics of the *true* minister, as well as certain marks by which we may discover the false one.

In the particular defence before us, he begins by telling the Corinthians that his office proceeds from the grace of God alone, and not from his own worthiness. And this conviction enables him to assure them that no difficulties have been able to weary him, or to make him shrink, through cowardice, from plainness of speech and action.

And then he goes on in the text to give certain marks which characterized his ministry, but which was altogether wanting in *that* of these false teachers.

These were : *purity of motive ; purity of conduct ; purity of doctrine.*

I. *Purity of motive.* “ We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty.”

By this he implies that these false teachers used such means to promote their schemes as men, generally, would be ashamed of ; such crooked acts, as would need only to be known, in order to ruin the cause they were intended to promote. For men see at once that the cause cannot be a good one which requires to promote it such crafty schemes as cannot bear the light of day. The grand object of these false teachers was not a good one, and hence they had recourse to underhanded means to hide it, for thus only could they hope to have any chance of acceptance with those who knew the purity of St. Paul’s motive. And need it be said that the same purity of motive is required now, and that he whose object in entering the ministry is such that he has to resort to means of concealing it, would certainly be condemned by St. Paul, as one who had not renounced the “ hidden things of dishonesty ? ”

II. *Purity of conduct.* “ Nor walking in craftiness.” The whole life of these false teachers was a crafty attempt to appear what they were not, to appear as if their actions were guided by a changed heart, whereas they

really continued to live as they had formerly done, without any change of life or conversation. But St. Paul tells the Romans that they who have been buried with Christ should walk in *newness* of life; and in many other places he refers to the change of conduct which had taken place in those who had been called to be saints. But then these would-be teachers had undergone no such change; they had not been renovated by grace; they had not been buried with Christ, for they had not put off the former conversation, and been renewed in the spirit of their minds.

And what is he now but a false teacher and an impostor who pretends to teach others the road to heaven, without himself leading the way, who undertakes to show others how to find acceptance with God, without having first experienced that acceptance himself?

III. *Purity of doctrine.* “Nor handling the Word of God deceitfully.” There can, of course, only be two reasons for this deceitful handling, either (*a*) To arrive at false doctrine, or, (*b*) To further some selfish end. Men do the first when they try, as some of these early teachers did, to fit Scripture into some system of human philosophy, and come to it, not to be taught by it, but to be confirmed in opinions received elsewhere, and to teach as Divine truth the views which they brought to the Sacred Book, and not the views which they brought therefrom. And men do the latter when, instead of preaching Christ, and Him crucified, they aim, by intellectual display, to preach themselves; when the object of the sermon is to show how cleverly or ingeniously they can handle texts of Scripture, and thus entertain their hearers, while their souls’ disease requires healing; in short, when, by any means, they hold themselves up in the place of that Saviour for whom souls are thirsting.

And now having shown what the true minister *is not*, he shows in the next place what *he is*. "But by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to men's consciences in the sight of God."* The best commentary on this will be his own fuller accounts of his ministry which he gives to the Ephesian elders at Miletus, where we shall find (as indeed he tells us here) that his conduct was the exact opposite of these false teachers'.

In opposition to their selfish motives, we find that he had but one end in view—"to testify the Gospel of the grace of God." "For three years he ceased not to warn each one of them with tears." He laboured with diligence and patience to tell them, not what would please, but what would profit, and that, not only in public discourses, but from "house to house."

In opposition to their unchanged lives, we find that he "served the Lord with all humility of mind," and feared not to call the attention of the Ephesian elders to his conduct, reminding them after what manner "He had been with them at all seasons, from the first day he came into Asia."

In opposition to their deceitful handling of the Word of God, we find him "testifying both to Jews and Greeks repentance towards God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ;" "he kept back nothing that was profitable for them;" "he shunned not to declare to them the whole counsel of God."

And thus, by a faithful and fearless discharge of his duty, he commended himself to men's consciences in the sight of God. It is only by such purity of motive, having but one end in view, the glory of God and the salvation of souls; by such purity of conduct, "being examples to the flock;" and by such faithful handling of the Word of God, that we can hope to commend ourselves to the con-

* See a Homily on this text in HOMILIST, 1st series, 2nd vol., page 226.

sciences of those with whom we have to do, and discharge our duty as in the sight of God.

And though we, like St. Paul, may meet with difficulties in this faithful discharge of duty, we must strive to look upon our trials as he did, "for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." J. C.

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Job.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of great scholarly and critical worth; such as Drs. Barnes, Wemyss, Mason, Goode, Noyes Lee, and Herman Hedwick Bernard: the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering: but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in an order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.

Subject: THE FOE OF FOES.

"Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them. And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all

that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord.”—Job i. 6-12.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS. Ver. 6.—“*Now there was a day,*”—‘Now when it was the day’—Dr. Bernard; ‘And it came to pass as it *might be* to-day’—Dr. Lee; ‘And the day came’—Dr. Good;—“*When the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord.*” Before Jehovah. The “sons of God” here evidently denote celestial intelligences, either of the angelic or human order, *i.e.*, the sainted spirits of departed men. All holy souls are “sons of God.” “*And Satan came also among them.* The word “Satan” means ‘adversary.’ Some translate it the ‘accusing angel,’ and suppose that the being represented here is not that great arch-enemy of souls, the prince of the power of the air, so often spoken of in the New Testament; but some high officer in God’s spiritual kingdom, whose mission it is to inspect and test the moral characters of God’s children in this world, and to report the same to his Great Master—a *recording angel*. This is the view of Herder, Eichhorn, Wemyss, and others. (See *Job and his Times* by Wemyss.) There are many reasons against this opinion.

Ver. 7.—“*And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.*” Some render this,—‘from roaming round the earth and walking about it.’ Dr. Good says, “The language means not so much the going backwards and forwards as making a circuit and circumference, going round about. The language means constant action in a wide sphere of activity.”

Ver. 8.—“*And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job?*” In the margin, the last clause is, ‘set thine heart on,’ and this is the literal translation. The meaning may be, Hast thou in thy vast peregrinations specially marked my servant Job, “*That there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil?*” The character which was given to Job in the first verse is here repeated by the Almighty Himself, and therefore Divinely endorsed.

Ver. 9.—“*Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?*” Is his worship disinterested? Is he not serving Thee for the sake of Thy kindness to him, and for the advantages he still expects?

Ver. 10.—“*Hast thou not made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.*” The last clause has been thus translated:—“The works of his hands thou hast blessed,” and thou hast spread abroad his substance in the earth.’ The idea is—‘Hast Thou not so wondrously protected himself, family, and property, from plunderers, and so blessed the labour of his hands, that he therefore serves Thee?’ He serves Thee, not because of what Thou art in Thyself, but because of what Thou art to him!

Ver. 11.—“*But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.*” The last clause of this verse has been differently rendered. ‘Will he bless thee to thy face?’—Dr. Good; ‘In thy presence will he bless thee?’—Dr. Lee; ‘Will he not blaspheme Thee because of Thy anger?’—Dr. Bernard. The idea in all cases is the same, viz., that if Jehovah ceased to bless him, Job would not only cease to serve him, but oppose him.

Ver. 12.—“*And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold all that he hath is in thy power.*” Margin, ‘in thy hand.’ “*Only upon himself put not forth thine hand.*” The license the adversary here received to afflict Job extended to his sons, daughters, and property, but no farther. He was not at present to touch Job. “*So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord.*” He left the Council Chamber of the Eternal.

HOMILETICS.—We have two things here to notice as introductory to that subject, which we shall make the dominant theme of these verses.

First: *A highly figurative representation of the Eternal and His spiritual kingdom.* The language cannot be taken as a literal history of what actually occurred: it is a poetic representation; such a representation as Christ Himself often made in His parables of spiritual and eternal things. Indeed, all representations of God must be figurative, must be in accommodation to our modes of conception; for how else could any creature get an idea of the Infinite Spirit, a Being without limits in time, capacity, or space? “The language here,” says a modern expositor, “is taken from the proceedings of a monarch who had sent forth messengers or ambassadors on important errands through the different provinces of his empire, and who now returned to give an account of what they had observed, and of the general state of the kingdom. Such a return would, of course, be on a fixed day, when their report would be “returnable,” and they required to give in an account of the state of the kingdom.”

Secondly: *A remarkable meeting of the Great God and some of His intelligent creatures.* Here is an insight into the Privy Council of the Eternal; the veil which separates the visible from the invisible is drawn aside, and we see the assembly of God’s Cabinet Ministers, and He amongst them. Is there anything improbable in the Eternal periodically bringing

certain orders of His intelligent creatures into a special proximity to Himself for special purposes? I trow not. The Bible in many places favours the idea. What seems remarkable is, that the Arch-fiend should gain admission to those councils, get a hearing, and receive a power. I should not be astonished to find Michael and his angels (Rev. xii. 7), and Gabriel (Luke i. 19), and the "elect angels" (1 Tim v. 21), and the "spirits of just men made perfect," in that wonderful assembly; but I am astonished to find that the Evil One should find an entrance there.

It is to this being that we shall now direct special attention. The passage teaches several things concerning him:—

I. That he has A PERSONAL EXISTENCE. Throughout the passage he is spoken to as a person, he represents himself as acting as a person "going to and fro in the earth," &c.

First: The personality of his existence is *suggested by reason*. (1.) As there are existences gradually sinking beneath man down to nothing, so there may be intelligent beings existing above man, up to the highest point of creatureship. (2.) As men have fallen and become rebels against God, there is nothing improbable in the supposition that there are beings above man who have done the same. (3.) As the fallen amongst men become the tempters of others, and this in proportion to their depravity and power, it is very probable that amongst the fallen ones above us there are leaders in wickedness. Because of this natural probability, almost all peoples in all lands have believed in an arch-fiend, a malignant "god of this world."

Secondly: The personality of his existence is *confirmed by human history*. It is almost impossible to account for the absurdities which men entertain, and the enormities which they perpetrate, without going up to some foul spirit who blinds the eyes and flames the passions of men.

Thirdly: The personality of his existence is *declared in the Bible*. Matt. iv. 3; John viii. 44; Acts xxvi. 18; Eph. vi. 12; 1 Thess. iii. 5; 2 Peter ii. 4; Jude 6; Rev. xii. 10, &c., &c. He is called by different names, Satan, Devil, Old Serpent,

Prince of the Power of the Air, Beelzebub, Dragon, &c., &c. Such a being then exists. When he commenced his career of wickedness is not known. He prowled about this universe when the world was in its youthhood and Adam in his prime.

The passage teaches—

II. That he is AN INTRUDER INTO THE SACRED. “Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them.” We have said it was remarkable that the devil should be thus permitted to intrude into the sacred, but we find him doing so elsewhere. A scene similar to this is described in 1 Kings xxii. 19-23; here Jehovah is represented “as sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left.” He inquires who would go and persuade Ahab that he might go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead? “And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him.” This he promised to do by being a “lying spirit in the mouth of all the prophets.” We find also in Matt. iv. 3, that he intruded into the very presence, aye into the very thoughts, of the Holy Son of God; and in Luke iv. 31, in the Synagogue at Capernaum, where Christ preached, we find the devil intruding; he entered the congregation and heard the sermon. “Satan came also among them.” Aye and so he ever does. Wherever the sons of the Almighty assemble, whether it be to inquire into the laws of nature, or to study the doctrines of inspiration, or to project schemes of usefulness, or to worship, Satan is amongst them; he is there, there to bias the intellect, and to pollute the feelings. Tell me where there is an assembly of good men, and you will tell me not only where God is in a special manner, but where the devil is also. Satan is amongst them. He attends prayer-meetings, goes to church, and listens to sermons; whoever is absent, he is present wherever “the sons of God” are congregated.

The passage teaches—

III. That he is AMENABLE TO THE ETERNAL. Two questions Jehovah addresses to him. One as to his *movements*.

“Whence comest thou?” In what part of my universe hast thou been wandering? The other as to his *opinion*. “Hast thou considered my servant Job?” The Eternal claims an authority over Satan’s activities and thoughts. He does not interrogate the evil one for the sake of information, for He knows his most secret steps, and sounds the depths of all his thoughts. The prince of darkness stands ever unveiled to the eye of Omniscience. The interrogatory is to impress him with his amenableness.

First: However *great* a creature is, he is still amenable to the Eternal. No creature spirit in the universe can outgrow his responsibility. Satan, perhaps, is one of the greatest of God’s creatures; he has power enough to “lead the world captive to his will,” yet he is not an irresponsible despot.

Secondly: However *wicked* a creature is, he is still amenable to the Eternal. This arch-fiend, with all his gigantic power, with all his daring rebellions, with all his profound machinations, and powerful confederates, has not been able through all these ages to snap one link of the chain of responsibility that binds him to the throne of God. Whilst you can never sin away your responsibility, you may sin up your guilt to crushing mountains.

The passage teaches—

IV. That he is A VAGRANT IN THE UNIVERSE. “From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.”

The language implies two things:—

First: *Homelessness*. “Going to and fro in the earth.” He is the “unclean spirit,” that is everlastingly walking through barren places, “seeking rest and finding none.” He is roaming the earth. There is no repose in sin. “The wicked are like the troubled sea.” There is no spot in the universe on which a depraved spirit can settle down, and be at rest. Satan and all his children are homeless wanderers in the universe; they have no shelter from the stormy blast or the scorching ray.

The language implies—

Secondly: *Zealousness*. The expression "Going to and fro" has in the original the idea of heat or haste. He is in a hurry; he moves with swift step, or perhaps on rapid wing. He does not saunter in his movements; he is no laggard; he is in earnest; malevolence burns within him, and as a "roaring lion he goeth about seeking whom he may devour."

The passage teaches—

V. That he is A SLANDERER OF THE GOOD. "Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, "Doth Job fear the Lord for nought?" &c. "Hast thou not made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?" &c. He slanders *God to man*. To our great progenitor he said, "Thou shalt not surely die, for God doth know the day on which thine eye is opened, thou shalt know both good and evil." He is constantly at this work; shaking men's faith in the Eternal by injecting suspicious thoughts. He slanders *man to God*. This he does here; he insinuates that what appeared religious and good in Job was simply a manifestation of selfishness. In this department of slander he acts the fool, for the Omniscient One knows the heart; in the other department, viz., slandering God to man, he is more sagacious and more successful. He is Diabolus, breaking the harmony of God's moral universe by slander.

The passage teaches—

VI. That he is A SLAVE OF THE INFINITE. "And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord." He acts *by permission*. Authority is given him to deal with Job's externalities, with his property and relations. Satan has no power against man until God gives it. Great as Satan is, mighty as is his influence in the world, he is not an independent existence, he is in the hands of the Everlasting Father, who sustains him every hour, and who uses him as His instrument. Infinite Goodness makes this foul fiend an engine for good in His universe. If he tempts us, he tempts us by Divine permission; and "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted

above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”—1 Cor. x. 13.

In the next paragraph we shall see the power that God gave this His Great Slave over the illustrious patriarch of Uz.



Sermonic Glances at the Gospel of St. John.

As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form, of Sermonic outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—“Introduction to New Testament,” by Bleek; “Commentary on John,” by Tholuck; “Commentary on John,” by Hengskenberg; “Introduction to the Study of the Gospels,” by Westcott; “The Gospel History,” by Ebrard; “Our Lord’s Divinity,” by Liddon; “St. John’s Gospel,” by Oosterzee; “Doctrine of the Person of Christ,” by Dorner; &c., &c.

Subject. CHRIST AND GOD.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”—John i. 1.

AS the translation of this passage cannot be improved, and the words are plain, no verbal exegesis is required. The subject is *Christ and God*, and we are here taught—

I. That Christ is the Eternal REVEALER of God. “In the beginning was the Word”—the Logos. A word is the revealer of the speaker. Christ here is called *the* Word. God has many words, many revealers: all the phenomena of nature, all the operations of His power, all the dispensations of His government, are His words; His revealers. But Christ is *the Logos*. He is not *a* word but *the* word. As the Revealer, this Word is distinguished—

First: By its *faithfulness*. Christ is the *exact* exponent of the Divine intellect and heart. There is not the slightest shade of discrepancy. He agrees with Eternal reality; thus He is called “*the* Truth,” and “the faithful and true Witness.” This word is distinguished—

Secondly: By its *fulness*. Other words only speak part of God. Some give intimations of His wisdom, some of His power, some of His goodness, &c. But Christ speaks out the *whole* God. "He is the express image of His Person." "So that he that hath seen Him hath seen the Father." The word is distinguished—

Thirdly: By its *forcefulness*. Human words are sometimes powerful, they are not always air; they are sometimes a force. God's words in nature are *mighty*. The Psalmist speaks of the "voice of the Lord" as "breaking the cedars," "making Lebanon bound like a young unicorn," "dividing the flames," &c., &c. But Christ is a Word infinitely more powerful. As a Word He moves and sways the moral mind of the universe; and more, He calls dead souls to life. Christ is "the power of God." He is then the Eternal Logos. "In the beginning;" when was that? The very initial moment of creation.

We are here taught—

II. That Christ is the Eternal COMPANION of God. "And the Word was with God." The expression implies that He had a conscious existence distinct from the Absolute One. He was *with* Him. He that is *with* me is not me. Thus Christ was with Him.

First: Christ was with Him in the sense of *agreement*. God's volitions were His; God's thoughts His; God's aims His. There was a perfect concurrence.

Secondly: Christ was with Him in the sense of *contact*. Never out of His presence, living in His light, breathing His inspirations. He was in "the bosom of the Father." "I was by Him," says Wisdom, "as one brought up with Him," &c., &c.

III. That Christ is the Eternal SELF of God. "And the Word *was* God." This expression may, and no doubt does, mean a union with the Eternal so mysterious as to transcend all creature conception; still there is a oneness which we can understand, and we can only speak of what we understand.

First: "He was God" in *form*. Deep, it would seem, in

the constitution of moral soul, is the craving for some *form* of God. As He appears in the universe, He transcends the limits of human vision. Christ is the form He has assumed; the form in which, in all probability, He appears to His intelligent universe as well as to man.

Secondly: "He was God" in *action*. Through Him the Eternal volitions are carried out and realized. He is the Actualizer of God's Eternal ideas. "The Father worketh hitherto, and the Son works." "The Father hath life in Himself, and hath given the Son life in Himself, that all men might honour the Son even as they honour the Father." As identical as thought is with the mind of the thinker, and speech with the life of the speaker, so is Christ with God.



Germ of Thought.



THE VISIONS OF PAUL.

Subject: FIRST VISION OF PAUL.

"And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light around about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And He said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do. And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus. And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know His will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of His mouth. For thou shalt be His witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now

why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."—Acts xxii. 6-16.

INTRODUCTION.—In our world there has never appeared perhaps a greater and a better man than Paul, the servant of Jesus by the will of God; of this the general history of his life, especially the character of his writings, afford a beautiful and satisfactory demonstration. He possessed a manly and vigorous intellect, a generative imagination, a warm and susceptible heart—all these, allied to and governed by a will of extraordinary force, fitted him for bold enterprise or patient endurance. Naturally he was ambitious, fearless, persevering and resolute, and thereby pre-eminently qualified to support any cause to which he might have allied himself; in this respect he was set apart, as it were, from his mother's womb. It is quite clear, from the nature of things, as well as from his history, that Paul was not perfect; but taking all things into consideration, he was perhaps the finest specimen of regenerated humanity on record; and considering Christ only in relation to this world, Paul was second to Him. Moreover, Paul was a great theological writer, a Christian divine. Descended from religious parents, he was by them dedicated to the religion of his ancestors. Brought up at Tarsus, a city then distinguished for its school of philosophy, he became acquainted with Grecian literature. After a time he was sent to study under Gamaliel, and with great intensity of thought devoted himself to the examination of the institutions, doctrines, and ceremonies of his national religion. But there suddenly came over him a great change, and he counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus.

The writings of the Apostle Paul have been the greatest perplexity to sceptics and infidels, whilst they have been the nourishment, strength, and joy, of every true believer. Blessed be God for the Gospel! Though Christ never wrote a book, a great mind was raised up to unfold the eternal thoughts of the Eternal Son of God: let us love the book, and draw our faith, confidence, hopes, and inspirations from it alone. I think it will be interesting to draw your attention

to the extraordinary visions which this servant of God enjoyed; they were intimately connected with his inner and outer life, and I think we cannot understand the history of the Apostle without attending to these. We should bear in mind that visions have been applied by God in every past age for the instruction of mankind. I need not prove this, for it is stated in the Bible that patriarchs and prophets, priests and laymen, evangelists and apostles were favoured by God with extraordinary visions—not for their own sakes, but for the world at large.

Is it possible for any man to read these visions without believing that there is a spiritual world? O brethren, we need something to detach us from the hard materialism which binds up the hearts and intellects of men—something to produce seriousness and reverence, veneration and humility: and what can do that so well as close and thoughtful communion with that state of existence, on the margin of which we are?

THIS subject divides itself into two parts:—

I. THE MATERIAL AND EXTERNAL. That this vision of Paul at Damascus is supremely important appears from the fact that it is three times recorded in the Acts. It created an epoch in his own history, in the history of the Church, and in the history of general civilization. There are several things worthy of our attention connected with the material and external part of this vision:—

1. *There was a great light.* It was a light above the brightness of the sun. This was not electric fluid, as some Rationalists maintain, but the Shekina, for light was an emblem of Deity. Paul was a Jew in prejudice, history, and religion. God said, I will give you a miracle; there is the Shekina you have heard of, the light that Abraham saw, and it travelled before your fathers in the desert: and its extraordinary brightness dazzled Paul and his companions.

2. *The appearance of Jesus Christ.* I believe that the Saviour appeared physically and objectively, probably in the light.

You are aware that seeing Christ really and personally after the resurrection was necessary to constitute apostleship; and

Paul rested the validity of his apostleship on his having *seen* Christ, though "Born out of due time."

3. *The voice that spoke.* It was heard by the company generally, but it particularly addressed Paul. "Saul, Saul, why," &c.

II. THE INTERNAL AND SPIRITUAL. Some have said that Paul was miraculously converted. There is a sense in which it is true, and a sense in which it was not true; we are not to consider that there was a magical force to compel him, but the process was governed and guided by laws which influence every conversion. What was the miracle then? The means of carrying moral truth and moral influence into the heart of the Apostle. Do not forget that conversion, wherever it takes place, is brought about in the same way. God, with reverence be it spoken, has only one method of acting upon mind, that is, by *truth* and *love*. The internal consist of:—

1. *The Cardinal Truth announced.* "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Here we have two truths constituting one great truth. One is, that Jesus of Nazareth was then alive. There is something very instructive, and effective, in the language of Christ; He did not say, I am the Son of God, the judge of the world, Jesus of Nazareth. Paul, you have heard of me; you laughed at me with your schoolfellows in Jerusalem, and did everything to pour contempt on my name; you thought I was dead, but I am still alive.

The other is, Jesus identifies Himself with His religion.—"Whom thou persecutest." He could not persecute Him personally, for He was gone to heaven; the meaning is, Christ looked on the new cause as Himself. The Church is not to be lightly talked of by every boy and girl. God keep us from trifling with His own institution! One of the sins of the present day is the wanton, light, conceited way in which teacher and taught, priest and people talk of Christ's Church. There is a Church; it is composed of souls united together to Christ by His own breath: let us have wisdom to find it out, understand it, and duly reverence it.

2. *The Solemn Remonstrance.* "Why persecutest thou me?" Paul had certain qualifications to be an excellent persecu-

tor. (1.) Personal respectability. (2.) He was a learned young man. (3.) Religious zeal. Jesus did not pay evil for evil, but began by reasoning with him; was not this question the appeal of reason to reason, of authority to conscience, of love to the human heart, of Divine power to the entire nature of man? Brethren, let me assure you that sooner or later the Son of God will demand a reason for all we do.

3. *The Appointment to a Grand Commission.* He was appointed to two things: (1.) To be an Apostle. (2.) To be a teacher. As an Apostle and Teacher he was to open the eyes of men, in the spiritual, intellectual, and general sense. Would it not be well if the ministry had always acted on that principle? There has been a ministry going forth in the name, bearing the dress and livery of Christ, to cover the eyes of men with a thick dark veil, so that they can see nothing. Also he had to offer "remission of sins." Forgiveness of sins is not a dream, but a reality. Come to me, says God, and although your sins be crimson and scarlet, I will make them as wool and snow.

CALEB MORRIS.

(*To be continued.*)



Subject: THE DUTY OF THE STRONG TO THE WEAK.

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not Himself."—Romans xv. 1-3.

THE context suggests several things concerning *conscientiousness*. First: That conscientiousness in the case of some religious men has respect to very unimportant matters. Amongst the Christians in Rome there were some who had a conscientious belief concerning diet; they thought it wrong to eat the meats and vegetables that had been offered to idols. There have always been men in the Church who have made a conscience of trifles. Secondly: That the conscientiousness of one man is no rule for the conduct of another. Because one

man in the Church exalts trifles to importance, and makes them matters of conscience, I, as a member of that Church, whilst respecting his sincerity, am not bound to follow his example. Thirdly: That conscientiousness directed to unimportant matters indicates great weakness of character. Men who attach paramount importance to comparatively trifling subjects, Paul regards as "weak" men.

The subject of the text is the duty of strong men to these weak ones. What is the duty? To despise and denounce them? No. To assume authority over them, and force them to renounce all faith in such trivial matters? No. To grant them a mere toleration, allow them to attend to their puerilities, but feel no interest, whatever, in their history? No. "We who are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak." This is the duty, and the text suggests three remarks concerning it.

I. It is a work NOT VERY PLEASANT TO SELF.—"Not to please ourselves." The language seems to imply what is really a truth, that it would be more pleasant to detach one's-self altogether from such weak men in the Church, than to be attending to their conscientious trivialities. In all Christian communities there are men who are constantly obtruding their conscientious belief in hoary dogmas, sectarian customs, and ritual observances. Nothing, perhaps, is more irritating to strong men who have outgrown such crochets, and who live in the free realm of spiritualities, than the everlasting twaddlings of these little souls. But Paul says, notwithstanding the disagreeableness of it, you must not only tolerate them but "bear their infirmities." You must come down to their little world, and appear loving and magnanimous, as a parent amongst children; don't kick at their toys, but show them something better. The most *painful* part of these weak-minded men in Churches is that they do not think themselves "weak;" on the contrary, they regard themselves as strong, as authorities in the faith, and they dictate and denounce. In proportion to their very feebleness is their *insolence*; if they confessed their weakness there would be some pleasure in "bearing their infirmities." But it is

painful to common human nature to bear the infirmities of those who would be "Lords over God's heritage." Still Paul says it must be done. The text suggests—

II. It is a work TRULY GRATIFYING TO THE WEAK. "Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification." The word "neighbour" here, which some translate brother, undoubtedly points to the weak-minded Christian referred to in the preceding verse.

First: The weak man, by this treatment, is gratified by the reception of *good*. "Let every one of us please his neighbour for his *good*." He might perhaps be gratified by your coming down to his level, by endorsing his views, and flattering his prejudices. But whilst this would be a gratification, it would be a sin also—a sin—in him who experienced it, and a sin in him who imparted it. No; he is pleased, inasmuch as the generous treatment of the stronger brother has done him morally good; the breath of a nobler spirit upon him has dispersed in some measure the fumes about his soul, brightened his horizon, and touched him into a fresher life. He is pleased because his moral circulation is quickened, and he feels himself a stronger man.

Secondly: The "good" he has received is through his *edification*. Not through flattering his prejudices, but by indoctrinating his soul with higher truths. We have known cases where some of those weak men—men of narrow views and diseased conscientiousness—have been "pleased" by the "good" they have received through the broad views and noble spirit of stronger men. The text suggests that—

III. It is a work PRE-EMINENTLY CHRISTLIKE. "For even Christ pleased not Himself." "He bore our griefs and carried our sorrows." To "bear the infirmities" of others He sacrificed Himself. How Christ bore with His disciples! "How wide the interval," says Robert Hall, "which separated His religious knowledge and attainments from theirs! He, the fountain of illumination; they, encompassed with infirmities! But did He recede from them on that account? No; He drew the bond of union closer, imparted successive

streams of effulgence till He incorporated His spirit with theirs, and elevated them into a nearer resemblance with Himself." Aye, it requires Christlike love to fulfil this duty. There is, it is true, a love in nature that acts in some spheres in this direction. A mother's love "bears the infirmities" of the weak. She carries the sorrows of her children on her heart. But this love is not strong enough to bear the infirmities of the weak everywhere; nothing short of the love of Christ will qualify a man for this.

CONCLUSION: All Christians are pilgrims on the same road to eternity. Some are feeble, emaciated, and heavy laden; others are comparatively strong and unencumbered. The duty of the strong is to take the weak by the hand and share the load. "I have found," says Feeble-Minded in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, "much relief from pilgrims, though none was willing to go so softly as I am forced to do; yet still, as they came on, they bid me be of good cheer, and said that it was the will of the Lord that comfort should be given to the feeble-minded, and so went on their own pace."



Subject: THE SOUL'S TRUE PROGRESS.

"Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God. Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment."—Heb. vi. 1-3.

THESE words suggest to us two things concerning the soul's true progress.

I. The STARTING place. The moral platform from which the soul is to start is here described as "principles." "Leaving the principles." What are those "principles?" They are here specified.

First: *Evangelical Repentance*. "Repentance from dead works." All sinful works are dead works. They spring from souls morally dead, and they lead to death. Repentance, or turning from them, is amongst the first things in a religious life.

Secondly: *Godward Faith*. "Of faith toward God." To

turn really *from* sin is to turn *to* God. We must turn our face to the good if we would turn from the bad.

Thirdly: *Spiritual cleansing*. "The doctrine of baptisms." Water baptisms are but symbols of spiritual purifying. There is no baptism worth contending for but that of the Spirit.

Fourthly: *Reliance on Christ*. "Laying on of hands." The allusion here is, undoubtedly, to the custom of the Jewish worshippers, of laying their hands on the heads of the sacrificed victims, to indicate their confidence in the efficiency of the sacrifice. The confidence symbolized by that act is that which the Gospel inculcates in relation to Christ.

"My faith would lay her hand
On that dear head of Thine,
While like a penitent I stand,
And there confess my sin."

Fifthly: *A Future State*. "And of resurrection of the dead." The Sadducees denied this. "Christ brought life and immortality to light."

Sixthly: *Eternal Retribution*. "Eternal judgment." Now these six things are what Paul calls here the "principles," or *elements*, "of the doctrine of Christ." Repentance, Godward faith, Spiritual cleansing, reliance on Christ, a future state, and eternal retribution, constitute, so to speak, the ground from which the soul starts on its road to true progress. In other words, and dropping the figure, the beginning of true personal Christianity consists in the acceptance and realization of these Gospel verities. From these the start begins, and nowhere else.

II. The *RESTING* place. "Go on unto perfection." Where is the resting place? How far on? As far on as perfection is. In what does the perfection of the soul consist?

First: In *accuracy of Divine knowledge*. In the sense of knowing *all* things, no creature soul will ever be perfect; but in the sense of knowing what we know *correctly*, is the perfection of finite intellect. Here our knowledge is not only very limited, but the limited knowledge is very incorrect.

Secondly: In *conformity to the Divine will, so far as known*. God's will concerning us runs on through the eternity of our

being. Conformity to the *whole* of that is an impossibility; but conformity up to the point of our knowledge is our duty; and constitutes our "perfection." That amount of obedience which to-day would make us perfect, would, if more of the Divine will was known, leave us on the morrow imperfect.

Thirdly : In *the prospects of an ever-brightening future*. Hope is an instinct of soul, or rather one of the most craving appetites of our soul. An unattained, though attainable, good must ever be kept looming on its eye, if there is to be perfection of enjoyment.

Now, Paul says, "Leaving the principles" or elements "of the doctrine of Christ," we must "go on to perfection." "Leaving" them! How? Not in the sense of abandoning them or parting from them, as we leave garments that we have outgrown, for we shall never outgrow those truths, but in the sense of working them out—developing them fully. To abandon them would be to lose our strength, for they are the very life of the soul. They are to be *left behind*, as the builder leaves the foundation stone behind, as he piles one stone on another, until the magnificent superstructure is complete. They are to be *left behind* as the towering branches of the tree leave their roots behind, whilst they shoot up, bask themselves in the sun, and enrobe themselves in beauty. They are to be *left behind*, as the scholar leaves the simple and undetached letters of the alphabet he learnt as a child, behind, whilst he goes on to combine them into new forms, and work out their powers in the high fields of scholarship, literature, and science. "Perfection" is the resting place. "Perfection"—what a word is this! What an immeasurable treasury of blessedness does it contain! "Perfection"—it is an ever-ascending path—it is an ever-expanding domain—an ever-brightening sky!

CONCLUSION.—Have you commenced your progress? Are you on the right starting ground? As your building towers upwards—are you sure that the right foundation stone is beneath you? As your tree pushes sunwards, are you sure that the rootings are of a kind that will supply you long with the vital sap?

Subject: SLIPPERY PLACES.

"Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction."—Psa. lxxiii. 18.

WINTER is the season of frost. Then there is ice on every hand. There are perils on the land and on the water; often serious accidents to old and young. Perhaps falls on the highway, and broken limbs; perhaps the scene of youthful frolic and gaiety suddenly darkened by the shadow of death, and the shrieks of woe. "Slippery places." Let us study the moral lessons of the figure.

I. THERE ARE SLIPPERY PLACES IN LIFE. Life is a journey—but the way is not all alike. There are hills as well as valleys. There are rough places as well as smooth. There are ways full of peril, as well as paths of pleasantness and quiet resting places. Note some of the *Slippery places*.

First: *Scenes of Animal Excitement*. The market—the theatre—the social feast—the excitements of wine and music, such things as work upon the senses, and enkindle the passions. The fascination of *feeling strongly* is a snare to many. Cf. Job i. 4, 5; Isa. v. 11, 12; Prov. xxiii. 29, 30-35; 1 Cor. x. 7-12. Samson and Delilah. Herod and Herodias. The Corinthian Church. There may be iniquity "even in the solemn meeting." Isa. i. 13.

Secondly: *Opportunities of selfish gratification*. "The flesh" only needs provocation and opportunity; cf. 1 John iii. 11-15. When you can get an advantage, as you think, unseen. Remember Achan. Josh. vii. 19-21. When the man you hate is at your mercy. Cain and Abel. Joseph and his brethren, Gen. xxxvii. 19. Doeg and David, 1 Sam. xxi. 7, xxii. 9. Haman and Mordecai, Est. v. 13, 14. David felt this peril, 1 Sam. xxiv. 4. In the pursuit of gain and pleasure, and all matters of selfish advantage, there are "Slippery places;" cf. Prov. i. 10-19. Zaccheus, Luke xix. 7, 8; 1 Tim. vi. 10. Ananias and Sapphira, Acts v. 1-3.

Thirdly: *Company of the Ungodly*. When Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom, he got upon slippery ground. He was saved as if by fire. When Peter sat down with the

soldiers and servants in the High Priest's kitchen, *as if he were one of them*, and not one of Christ's disciples, he was in a slippery place. Cf. Ps. i. 1; Prov. iv. 16; Jer. iii. 6-8.

Fourthly: *Circumstances when we are tempted to doubt of God's Righteousness and Love.* Loss of health, of property, of friends, the prosperity of the wicked. Job ii. 9. "Then said his wife unto Job, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God and die." Cf. Jer. xii. 1; Ps. lxxvii. 1-10; lxxiii. 2-14. Why do the wicked live? Why do they prosper in the world? Why are they suffered to commit such enormous crimes? With questions like these, many have vexed themselves.

"The intellectual power, through words and things, went sounding on a dim and perilous way."

II. THOSE WHO WALK IN SLIPPERY PLACES ARE IN DANGER OF FALLS. Says the Psalmist, v. 2, "My feet had well nigh slipped."

There is, first, *Insecurity.* No firm footing. Constant peril, sometimes visible, but often unseen and unsuspected, like ice covered with snow, or the treacherous crevasse of the Alps. The danger may be greater from special circumstances. *Ignorance.* "Where no counsel is, the people fall." Prov. xi. 14. *Proud self-confidence.* "An haughty spirit goeth before a fall." Prov. xvi. 18. *Distraction of mind.* Instead of looking at the path, the eye is with the heart. *Temperamental weakness, &c.*

Secondly: *Risk of Injury.* A fall may do much evil. (1.) To men's *peace.* (2.) To their *character.* (3.) To their *usefulness.* David; cf. 2 Sam. xii. 14. The fall of a good man discourages the young, saddens the godly, rejoices the wicked. Even if but *one* disciple backslide, the ungodly exult as if *all* had backslided. They "reproach a people for his single fall, and cast his filthy raiment at them all." "*Falls*" in slippery places are more hurtful to the old than to the young. When the young fall, they may get a bruise or sprain, or mayhap a broken bone, but they speedily recover. Not so the old. So also in spirituals. The fall of an "old disciple" is a very serious thing. It may cloud his last hours. It may leave a

blot on his name, never to be wiped out. Mourners sadly cry, "Alas! my brother." 1 Kings xiii. 30.

III. SLIPPERY PLACES PROVE FATAL TO THE WICKED.

First: *Unmask the evil of their character.* Prov. xi. 3. Judas.

Secondly: *Reveal the worthlessness of their hopes.* Seem to thrive, promise themselves ease and length of days. Vanity. When tested they fail utterly; v. 17; Prov. xxix. 1; Ps. cxlvi. 4; Job viii. 13-20.

Thirdly: *Manifest that they are the objects of God's displeasure;* v. 18-20. Nothing keeps them out of hell but God's mercy. Destruction is impending. Sure—sudden—overwhelming. "Their feet shall slide in due time." Deut. xxxii. 35. And when they fall, they fall utterly. Prov. vi. 15. Who can tell the awful darkness of their destiny? Prov. xiv. 32. No friend—no happy days—no hope of joys to come—no interest in the future: but the worm which dieth not, and the fire which never shall be quenched. Prov. xxiv. 19, 20. 2 Pet. ii. 8, 9.

IV. SOME COUNSELS AS TO SLIPPERY PLACES.

First: *Avoid them, when possible.* Ps. cxix. 101; Prov. i. 10; 1 Thess. v. 10; Ps. xvii. 4.

Secondly: *When you do come to them walk warily.* "Watch and pray." "Be not high-minded, but fear."

Thirdly: *Take such friendly help as may be available;* v. 23; Eph. vi. 15; Ps. xxiii. 4; Ecc. iv. 9, 10; Ps. xxvi. 1; cxix. 63.

Fourthly: *Should you fall, endeavour to get good from the evil.* Time for thought—prayer—renewal of faith and strength. Learn your need of *humility, vigilance, reliance on Christ Jesus, sympathy with the brethren, renewed endeavours after holiness.* Prov. xxiv. 16; Mic. vii. 8; Rom. xiii. 12-14; Ps. xxxvii. 31; 1 Sam. ii. 9. Deut. xxii. 4, compared with Gal. vi. 1-3. Job says (Job. xxix. 15), "Feet was I to the lame." Peter, when he was restored, strove earnestly by word and deed to "strengthen the brethren."

Fifthly: *Should you escape, be thankful, and give God the glory.* Ps. xciv. 18; Ps. cxvi. 1-8.

Sixthly: *Let Jerusalem come into your mind.* There will be no

“slippery places” there : but the Lamb, which is in the midst of the Throne, shall lead His flock unto fountains of living waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. “Now unto Him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen.”
—Jude 24, 25.

WILLIAM FORSYTH, A.M.

The Pith of Renowned Sermons.

The sermons of some of the greatest preachers of England are lost to modern men through their verbosities ; it is the intention, under this section, to give from time to time their pith and spirit.

No. XIV.—THOMAS ADAMS.

Subject : SEMPER IDEM ; OR THE IMMUTABLE MERCY OF JESUS CHRIST.

“Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.”—Hebrews xiii. 8.

THE words may be distinguished into a centre, a circumference, and a mediate line, referring the one to the other. The immoveable centre is Jesus Christ. The circumference, that runs round about Him here, is eternity : “Yesterday, to-day, and for ever.” The mediate line referring them is, *ὁ αὐτός*, the same : “Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.”

I. THE CENTRE. Jesus Christ is the centre of this text ; and not only of this, but of the whole Scripture. The sum of Divinity is the Scripture ; the sum of the Scripture is the Gospel ; the sum of the Gospel is Jesus Christ ; in a word, *nihil continet 'verbum Domini, nisi verbum Dominum*. There is nothing contained in the word of God, but God the word. Nor is He the centre only of His word, but of our rest and peace. “I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus

Christ, and Him crucified.”—1 Cor. ii. 2. Thou hast made us for thee, O Christ; and our heart is unquiet till it rest in Thee.

II. THE REFERRING LINE. Proper to this centre, is *Semper Idem*, the same. There is no mutability in Christ; “no variableness, nor shadow of turning.”—Jas. i. 17. All lower lights have their inconstancy; but in the “Father of lights” there is no changeableness. The sun hath his shadow; the “Sun of righteousness” is without shadow.—Mal. iv. 2; that turns upon the dial, but Christ hath no turning.

As this meditation distils into our believing hearts much comfort, so let it give us some instructions. Two things it readily teaches us: a dissuasive caution, and a persuasive lesson.

First: *It dissuades our confidence in worldly things*, because they are inconstant. Solomon compares *wealth* to a wild fowl. “Riches make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.”—Prov. xxiii. 5. Not some tame house bird, or a hawk, that may be fetched down with a lure, or found again by her bells; but an eagle that violently cuts the air, and is gone, past recalling. Wealth is like a bird; it hops all day from man to man, as that doth from tree to tree; and none can say where it will roost or rest at night. It is like a vagrant fellow, which, because he is big-boned, and able to work, a man takes in a-doors, and cherisheth; and perhaps for a while he takes pains; but, when he spies opportunity, the fugitive servant is gone, and takes away more with him than all his service came to. *Honour* must put off its robes when the play is done; make it never so glorious a show on this world’s stage, it hath but a short part to act. A great name of worldly glory is but like a peal rung on the bells; the common people are the clappers; the rope that moves them is popularity; if you once let go your hold and leave pulling, the clapper lies still, and farewell honour. *Strength*, though, like Jeroboam, it put forth the arm of oppression, shall soon fall down withered.—1 Kings xiii. 4. *Beauty* is like an almanack: if it last a year, it is well. *Pleasure*, like lightning: *oritur, moritur*, sweet but short, a flash and away.

Secondly: *This persuades us to an imitation of Christ's constancy.* Let the stableness of His mercy to us work a stableness of our love to Him. Irresolution and unsteadiness is hateful, and unlike to our Master, Christ, who is ever the same. "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways."—James i. 8. The inconstant man is a stranger in his own house: all his purposes are but guests, his heart is the inn. If they lodge there for a night, it is all; they are gone in the morning. Many motions come crowding together upon him; and like a great press at a narrow door, whiles all strive none enter.

III. THE CIRCUMFERENCE; wherein is a distinction of three times, past, present, future. *Tempora mutantur*: the times change, the circumference wheels about, but the Centre is "the same for ever."

We must resolve this triplicity into a triplicity. Christ is the same, according to these three distinct terms, three distinct ways:—

•First: *Objective*, in His Word:

Secondly *Subjective*, in His power.

Thirdly: *Effective*, in His gracious operation.

First: *Objectively*, Jesus Christ is the same in His word; and that (1.) yesterday, in pre-ordination. (2.) To-day, in incarnation. (3.) For ever, in application.

(1.) *Yesterday in pre-ordination.* Acts ii. 23; 1 Peter i. 20; Rev. xiii. 8. (2.) *To-day in incarnation.* When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman. Gal. iv. 4. (3.) *For ever in operation.* He doth continually by His Spirit apply to our consciences the virtue of His death and passion.

Secondly: *Subjectively*, in His power the same. (1.) *Yesterday in the creation.* "All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made." John i. 3. All things, even the great and fair book of the world, of three so large leaves, *cælum, sohum, salum*; heaven, earth, and sea. (2.) *To-day in the governing.* "He upholdeth all things by the word of His power." Heb. i. 3. His creation was a short providence; His providence a perpetual creation. The one sets up the frame of the house; the *other* keeps it in repara-

tion. (3.) *For ever; because He shall judge the world.* "God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom He hath ordained." Acts xvii. 31. "In the day that God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." Rom. ii. 16.

Thirdly: *Effectually*, in His grace and mercy. So He is the same—(1.) Yesterday, to our fathers. (2.) To-day, to ourselves. (3.) For ever, to our children,

(1.) *Yesterday to our fathers.* All our fathers, whose souls are now in heaven, those "spirits of just men made perfect." Heb. xii. 23. (2.) *To-day to ourselves.* His mercy is everlasting; His truth endureth from generation to generation. (3.) *For ever, to our children.* He that was yesterday the God of Abraham, is to-day ours; and will be for ever our children's. As well now "the light of the Gentiles," as before "the glory of Israel," Luke ii. 32, will be the God of thy seed. Saith the Lord to Abraham, "His mercy is on them that fear Him, from generation to generation." Luke i. 50.

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

Bristol.



Variations on Themes from Scripture.

No. XXVII.

Subject: PERSONAL BELIEF—continued.

§ 2.

WE can no more live, as Andrew Marvel is made to say in the memorable imaginary conversation with Bishop Parker—"We can no more live, my lord bishop, with breathing the breath of other men than we can by not breathing our own." With a homelier quaintness again is Lord Peterborough made to say, in the colloquy with William Penn, "Really, to speak my mind, a religion to be sound and wholesome must be home-brewed. In running across the way with it, you lose

almost all but the froth." The engrafted word is able to save the soul; but only if the engrafting is real, the flow of vital sap a reality, enabling the plant to take root downward and bear fruit upward.

"Not all the wisdom of the schools
Is wise for thee. Hast thou to speak?
No man hath spoken for thee. Rules
Are well; but never fear to break
The scaffolding of other souls:
It was not meant for thee to mount;
Though it may serve thee. Separate wholes
Make up the sum of God's account."

Tracing the progress of restraints and constraints imposed upon Christian liberty by mediæval ecclesiasticism, an historian of the Reformation shows how the conviction which, according to the laws of human nature and of God's Word, ought to be freely formed in the heart and intellect of man, was enforced from without, ready made, and symmetrically arranged by authority; so that reflection, will, feeling, all the faculties of the human being which, subjected to the Word and Spirit of God, should work and produce freely, were stunted in their freedom and compelled to mould themselves to predetermined forms. The mind of man is thus said to have become like a mirror, into which outward images find entrance and are represented, but which possesses nothing of itself. "There were still, no doubt, souls taught immediately of God; but the great majority of Christians were holding the convictions of others; a faith peculiar to the individual became a rare thing; the Reformation alone restored this treasure to the Church." Another philosophical divine, pleading the claims of intellectual freedom within the Church, and affirming that to enumerate dogmas* is to excite strife, and that to enforce convictions is to rouse enmities, alleges that, nevertheless, there is only one kind of firm, consolatory, and saving faith, which suffices as a guide and support in life

*Against dogmatic teachings Goethe opposed the "fundamental rule," that all conceptions of the Deity must necessarily be *our* individual conceptions, valid for us, but not to the same extent for others. "Each has his own religion; must have it as an individual possession; let each see

and in death ; that is, the faith which is the result of a man's own inquiries. It is not in the nature of the feelings which God has given us, said a leading English writer of the last generation, that any good heart, in proportion as it reflects on the subject, should be content with any system of religion inferior to its notions of what is best. A living French theologian says of *le vrai disciple de Jésus Christ*, that "peu lui importe qui telle croyance soit celle de la multitude qui l'entoure, et qu'il ne puisse la rejeter sans creuser un abîme entre ses frères et lui ; tant que sa conscience individuelle, régénérée par l'exemple du Christ, ne lui a point ordonné d'y croire, il n'y croira point"—will not, and, for the matter of that, cannot. As Lady Mary Wortley Montague says, when contending that real faith cannot determine reward or punishment, being involuntary, and only the consequence of conviction, "We do not believe what we please, but what appears to us with the face of truth." So, again, to apply a sentence of Elia's: You may derive thoughts from others ; your way of thinking, the mould in which your thoughts are cast, must be your own. "Intellect may be imparted, but not each man's intellectual frame." "Persuasion I may keep for myself," says Kant, "if it is agreeable to me ; but I cannot, and ought not, to attempt to impose it as binding upon others."

that he be true to it, which is far more efficacious than trying to accommodate himself to another's." Goethe's English biographer tells us how peculiarly attracted the great German was to Lavater, by a certain community of religious sentiment, not at all of creed ; and a passage is quoted from a letter to a friend of Lavater's, in which Goethe says, "All which appears contradiction between us is only dispute about words, arising from my inability to feel things under other combinations than those actually felt by me ; and hence, in expressing their relation to me, I name them differently ; which has been the eternal source of controversy, and will for ever remain so."

An American writer of promise suggestively observes, on the fact of every soul of us knowing a separate world, that we may, in a way, look over into each other's worlds, and that our own may borrow from what lies about the borders of those adjacent ; but scarcely any two, however dear, inhabit literally one domain—have one identical range and region. The application is not far to seek—divers applications indeed, and diverse.

A judgment of this kind has only private validity—is only valid for the individual who judges; and the holding of a thing to be true in this way cannot be communicated.”* Each man must, as Bishop Blougram’s “Apology” puts it, avouch or follow, at the least sufficiently,

“The form of faith his conscience holds the best,
Whate’er the process of conviction was;
For nothing can compensate his mistake
On such a point, the man himself being judge.”



The Preacher's Dissecting Room;

AND

PEN PORTRAITS OF REPRESENTATIVE PREACHERS.

“WITHOUT A PARABLE SPAKE HE NOT UNTO THEM.”

Complaints against the modern pulpits are rife alike in social circles and literary productions. Whilst many of them are characterized by flippant ignorance and sceptical-rancour, others are marked both by good judgment and holy feeling. The purpose of these Sketches is the improvement of the pulpit. Nothing would the writer deprecate more than to wound the heart or get the finger of ridicule pointed at any honest-hearted preacher of Christ; hence he has clad his characters and circumstances with a fictitious vesture—like the Great Teacher, he has spoken in parables. We shall examine representative preachers of the four great prevailing schools—the SENSATIONAL, including (1.) the tragic; (2.) the comic; (3.) the rhapsodic. The INTELLECTUAL, including (1.) the technical; (2.) the grandiloquent; (3.) the philosophic. The SPIRITUAL, including (1.) the mystical; (2.) the intuitional; and the NONDESCRIPT, including a great variety.

No. II.

THE COMIC PREACHER.

THE comic preacher, like the tragic, is a member of the *sensational* school; he has not, however, such a numerous fraternity. There are many reasons for this. The comic preacher must have wit of some kind or other, and this is a rarer element in human life than that ruthless animalism that makes the tragic man. In addition to this, ecclesiastical proprieties, and the taste of church-going people, are not so favourable to the mirthful as to the melancholy. Men resort to the church more as a house of mourning than as a

* Kant, *Crit. of Pure Reason*. See the antepenultimate chapter *passim*.

scene of hilarity and glee, they go to weep rather than to laugh. The dim religious light, the sombre roof, the venerable arches, and the solemn mementoes of the dead which are associated with ecclesiastical buildings interdict, with a mute mightiness, any display of jocundity in the pulpit. Hence the comic preacher is, perhaps, seldom found in the Established Church. His sphere is in some of the provinces of Nonconformity. He has not generally passed through universities or colleges into the sacred office, but climbed up from scenes where ecclesiastical proprieties are disregarded and unknown. He has his class, and his class is a large one; for it is lamentable that the great bulk of the population of this so-called Christian country are more disposed to ridicule than to reverence religion, are more frivolous than thoughtful. The comic preacher appeals to this class, and they respond, they know his voice and they follow him. Hence he is found oftentimes as the recognised minister of a large community. The titles which the members of this fraternity give to their subjects, whilst revolting to the higher type of souls, are potent in their attractiveness to their own class.

Comic preachers have had a place in pulpits in every post-apostolic age. From a book now lying before us we select the following titles, which some of them gave their subjects of discourse: "The Church's Bowel Complaint,"—"The Snuffers of Divine Love,"—"The Spiritual Mustard-pot to make the Soul Sneeze with Devotion,"—"Crumbs of Comfort for Chickens of Grace,"—"Matches Lighted at the Divine Fire,"—"Some Fine Biscuits Baked in the Oven of Charity, Carefully Conserved for the Chickens of the Church, the Sparrows of the Spirit, and the Sweet Swallow of Salvation." Scarcely less grotesque and absurd are some of the subjects which we have seen announced by our contemporaries. "Old Clothes for New Souls,"—"Spectacles for the Blind and Crutches for the Lame,"—"Three days among the Worms," are specimens that crowd the long scroll. Whilst these subjects savour not either of reverence or chastened thoughtfulness, they indicate too clearly the existence of a frivolous class in society to which the preacher appeals, and that his object in gathering them under his voice is to play upon their risibilities and to entertain them with the ludicrous.

Some years ago we heard one of these comic pulpiteers in a Nonconformist church not a hundred miles from London. He was a man of short stature and attenuated frame. His head, though small, looked large in comparison with his body; it was as bald and shiny as a bladder of lard.

The nose was hooked; and the eyes, which were tiny and twinkling, were set deeply in their sockets; they were always peeping under their projecting brows; they were too small to come out and revolve in the full light. The whole face, in its contour, features, and expression, was too Hebraic to command your trust. The voice was shrill, nasal, and querulent; it lacked manhood in its notes and volume. From one of his admirers we learnt a little of his history before we entered his church. He had for upwards of twenty years peregrinated the British Isle as a teetotal lecturer, although now he took very kindly to the cup. He was from a boy very fond of books; if he had kleptomania it ran in that direction. He knew and could quote the title page of many of England's greatest authors. He was very great on anti-State Church platforms, and his shrieks of damnation at the steeples often thrilled his audience into frenzy. He was very fond of anecdotes; these he delighted to collect, to modify, and to publish, if not to make. He had written a good deal; for years he had been afflicted with the *cacoëthes scribendi*. His desire for popularity had been a passion for many years; never did greyhound pursue the hare over hill and dale with more strenuous stretch than he followed after fame. He had recourse to every species of clap-trap; clap-trap titles to his sermons, clap-trap subjects, clap-trap illustrations, clap-trap methods of delivery. He was a consummate trickster. Often had he been known to break out into song in the midst of his discourse, and this in order to represent or to caricature some personage to whom he had referred. When we heard him preach, it was in a Gothic church capable of holding 700 people, and it was well filled; but filled, for the most part, with men and women gaudily dressed, as grocers and drapers of the smaller sort are wont to garb themselves. We scarcely saw a face on which thought had chiseled its image. All were vacant in eye and frivolous in smirk; they came for entertainment. He took for his text the following verses:—

"Behold there was a man named Zacchæus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus who He was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him; for He was to pass that way."
—Luke xix. 2-4.

The subject of the sermon he entitled, "*Sinners Climbing after Salvation.*" He introduced his subject by remarks on short men. He said:—

That a man did not consist in the amount of clay he carried; the best things are often wrapped up in small parcels; a small man always fancies himself large; his imagination supplies him with all the flesh he lacks.

He acted a dramatized man walking the street with a strutting swagger, that scarcely admitted other wayfarers on the pavement to pass him on their way. Don't despise little men, said he, they don't want so much clothing as big men, nor always as much food, although sometimes little men are great eaters. Short men know how to get on in the world, too. This "Zacchæus was chief among the publicans, and he was *rich*." Short men are the guinea-cocks amongst the fowls; they are always crowing. But here is a short man climbing the tree of salvation, and he represents all sinners who try to get to heaven. They are all climbing trees.—1. *There is the tree of Sermons.* Sermons are trees intended for men to climb, in order that they may see Christ. Sometimes the tree is very short, it does not go high enough; if the poor little sinner, after all his climbing, can get to the top of it, he would only be able to see a few molehills. Sometimes the tree is very rotten in its branches. I have seen the little sinner climbing successfully to one branch of a sermon, but when he put his foot on the second, the branch broke and down he came tumbling, his head severely bruised, and lying all-fours on the ground. Sometimes the tree is very leafy. The little sinner as he climbs up from branch to branch, gets lost in leaves, leaves above him, leaves beneath him, leaves around him—it is all leaves. I say to these little Zacchæuses, Come down, for God's sake, or you will break your neck.—2. *There is the tree of Ceremonies.* Some of these trees grow in water; they are marine trees. Their roots are in water, and there is not a branch that rises higher than the water. How many little Zacchæuses there are, trying to climb these trees; they climb a few branches and then down they are again, splash, splash. From none of the marine trees can you possibly get a view of Christ, they don't go high enough. Some of these trees are very slippery; the priests have greased them from top to bottom. You have seen men in our country games climbing the greasy poles in order to gain some prize; they climb a few feet, and then down again they slip. The little Zacchæuses who are climbing these trees are very much like these poor fellows; they have no foot-hold, nothing to clutch; the higher they go, the more they are in danger of falling down and cracking their heads. 3. *There is the tree of the Gospel.*—Zacchæus! this is the tree to climb, my little fellow; this will take you up to a branch whence you can see Christ. First put your foot on the branch of doctrine, and stand there a while to look about you; don't be dizzy—hold on, and breathe a bit. Now make another effort, step up to the branch of promise. Are you up, Zacchæus? if so, how do you feel up there—happy? I hear him say, Ha, ha! I should think so; this is the tree. I ask you, sinners, to climb this tree. Come on—Christ is passing. Do you want to see Him? then make haste. Run, run, my little fellows, to the tree, and climb. You may not be so short in body as Zacchæus, but you are all short in soul. Some of your souls are so short that a congregation of them could settle down on the top of my little finger, and have plenty of room to spare.

This is a specimen of the sermon we heard him preach. He said much more, and some things more *outré* than we have noted down. He often framed his sentences in the strange and grim Carlylean mould; he did this to give the appearance of intellectual grandeur to his effusions. Though the things he said appear ridiculous on paper, yet one could have but little idea of the ludicrousness of the whole, unless he saw the grotesque actings, the Punch-like look, and heard the queer

intonations of voice. The object was to entertain, and to give the audience an impression of his wonderful cleverness. He put himself up as a genius, and he got in this way his stated hearers to accept him as such, and to noise abroad his fame.

Arnold and Spencer were, according to their engagement on the previous Sunday, present on this occasion. Arnold, who had induced Spencer to go, had himself been persuaded by his old neighbour, Jones, and who was a Deacon, and a great admirer of the preacher. Indeed, this Jones, who was a retired grocer, called his minister "the Prince of Preachers;" he said with emphasis that he was "the greatest horator in Hingland, and no mistake." The three left the church together, and went with Arnold to his house, where, after supper, they entered into discussion on the sermon. Jones, turning his head towards Arnold, said, "Aven't we 'ad a most hedifying sermon to-night?" This utterance so stirred the risibilities of both Arnold and Spencer, that, as they looked at each other, they could not suppress their laughter, for they were both men of strong mind and superior intelligence. Arnold was not only a man of first-class ability, but of extensive reading, great culture, possessing a large knowledge of men and things, and, like his friend Spencer, was earnestly in quest of something to satisfy the craving of his religious nature. Just as Arnold was about replying to the sage remark of Jones, Smith entered, who was a British schoolmaster in the town, who had also heard the sermon, and, like Jones, was a great admirer of the preacher.

Spencer, turning to Jones, said, "What a fool you must be, Jones, to admire such a discourse as we have just heard. Such trash I never heard before. Had I not been present I could never have believed that, in the name of Christianity, such rubbish could be spoken, such mountebankery enacted. I felt all the time that the preacher (I don't know his name, for I have never heard him before, and will take care never to hear him again), was a wretched charlatan, heartlessly trifling with the grandest realities of existence."

Here Smith interposed, and said—

"I cannot allow such remarks about my minister to be made in my hearing without uttering a protest. You don't understand him; he is a man overflowing with wit and humour; he is a genius, and a genius always says what no ordinary man could say. You don't know him, you must hear him again."

"Never any more," said Spencer. "Last Sunday evening I heard propounded, in the name of God, that from which

my soul revolted, and to-night I have been disgusted with buffoonery practised in the name of the sacred and divine."

"I am sure," said Smith, "our friend Arnold does not participate in your sentiments. He will agree with me that if a preacher has wit and humour in him (as our minister has), it is just as right that he should show it in his sermons as any other part of his nature—such as, reflectiveness, compassion, pathos, poetry, &c. Physiologists say that man has what no other animal has, an organ expressly formed for laughter, and old George Herbert has said—

'All things are big with jests, nothing that's plain
But may be witty, if thou hast the vein.'"

"The fact is," replied Arnold, "I am too sad at heart to talk on the subject. I am, like Spencer, earnestly looking out for some spiritual ministry which I and my family can attend on the Sunday; a ministry which, whilst it honours human reason, shall strengthen, develop, and sanctify all the moral forces of the soul. 'Where shall wisdom be found?' This is the deep cry of my nature. I went to-night earnestly in search of it, and I heard the voice of frivolousness and folly. One thing certainly the minister did for me to-night, he deepened the conviction that I have long had, that there ought to be some institution established by law, in this Christian country, for the purpose of preventing unfit men attempting to preach God's grand Gospel of reason and of love. I would have an authoritative standard established to which every man, aspiring to such a momentous work, should conform—a standard which should apply to his body—for I would not have men of small cranial development or ungainly presence to stand up as teachers before their fellow men; that should apply to his mind too—I would allow no man to whom God had not given the highest mental endowment, to enter on such an office; that should apply to his culture also—I would allow no man whose mind had not been disciplined by a suitable course of preparatory study to preach the Gospel; and that should, of course, apply to moral character; he should be well tested, and found sound to the inmost core."

"Bless me!" exclaimed Jones, "'Eaven forbid that we should come to this; that hall that the State considers unfit should be compelled to 'old their tongues on spiritual things. Why, what said Moses, 'Would that hall the Lord's people were prophets.'"

"That's right," said Smith, "Why, Arnold wants a State gagging machine. What next? I wonder. Jones has quoted

Moses, I'll quote Isaiah ; 'He that hath a dream let him tell it.' Free speech is one of man's inalienable rights."

"Well, well," rejoined Arnold, "I am not going to contend for my scheme. I see the difficulties connected with it, but I do feel, deeply, solemnly, devoutly feel, that something ought to be done to put an end to such pulpit utterances as we have heard to-night."

How shall I characterize this sermon? I must say that I enter largely into the views of Arnold and his friend. I know that some men are constitutionally comic; there is a sportive drollery running through their natures; they have a strong tendency to join incongruous things together, and to create the grotesque. They have a keen sense of the ridiculous; their eye is ever askant at the funny side of things, and all their faculties seem to play in a humorous jocundity. They have a queerness of face which indicates the drollery of their mind; so much so, that you can hardly look at them without laughing; the risible within you is touched the moment their eye catches yours. Such, indeed, was the case with certain preachers of this century, Beveridge, in the Church of England, Matthew Wilks, of Whitfield Tabernacle, Rowland Hill, of Surrey Chapel, Billy Dawson, of the Methodist community. The very faces of these men were strange to look at, but they were only indices to the oddities of their mental character. These men were all, undoubtedly, good and true, and did a noble work. Dawson we have heard more than once ourselves, never without alternate weeping and laughter. Preachers who are naturally endowed with this power, and who use it honestly and devoutly, may render great service to the cause of truth, morality, and religion. Humour has the power to enliven heavy argument, to flash home an unwelcome doctrine, to penetrate a secret vice, and to scathe it. A shaft of irony has often struck death to the roots of noxious weeds in the garden of souls. It was with this humour that quaint old Fuller formulated sentences that sparkle with an imperishable lustre.

But the comic preacher before me is a man who either simulates wit, or, if he has it, uses it not honestly in the cause of truth, but to make his empty auditory stare with wonder and admiration at his stupendous abilities. South, himself a brilliant wit, and one of the greatest preachers of the seventeenth century, has said, "That is not wit that consists not with wisdom."

"True wit is nature to advantage dress'd,
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed ;
Something whose truth convinced at sight we find,
That gives us back the image of our mind."—POPE.

A fact was told me, not long ago, illustrative of the despicable efforts of those would-be witty preachers. A preacher, who addresses every Sunday one of the largest congregations in one of the finest chapels in England, anxious to remind his people that they were not sufficiently generous in their contributions towards his support, addressed them in the following grotesque, and I will say irreverent, manner:—"What do you think? the Devil came to me the other night in a dream, and called to me by name. I said, 'What do you want, Devil?' and he said, 'I have something to say to thee.' 'What is it, Devil,' said I. He said, 'I can tell thee this, that a large number of those who come to hear thee preach on the Sunday never pay a penny towards thy support.' Whereupon I exclaimed in astonishment, 'Lord, is it possible!' And he said, 'It is a fact.' And I replied, 'I will not believe thee, Devil;'" and then, turning to his people, he said, "Nor will I believe him until I am assured by my deacons in the vestry of the fact." Such pulpитеering comedians do more to impede the progress of enlightened Christianity than the most determined efforts of infidelity.

There is all the difference in the world between a spontaneous flash of wit, going forth with conscience, and a studied witticism. The one is impious frivolity, the other is sanctified nature; the one is a rocket going up from the earth, making men stare and giggle for a moment; the other is forked lightning, coming down from heaven, and filling men with awe. Baxter says, in relation to this miserable witticism in the pulpit, "Of all preaching in the world, that speaks not stark lies, I hate that which tendeth to make the hearers laugh, or to move their minds with tickling levity, and affect them as stage-players used to do, instead of affecting them with a holy reverence in the name of God." Witticism in the pulpit may delight triflers, but will disgust thinkers, gratify the silly, but grieve the saint. What was written of the witty preachers of the seventeenth century is true of comic preachers in every age—

"Some take a text, sublime and fraught with sense,
But quickly fall into impertinence;
On trifles eloquent, with great delight,
They flourish out on some great mystic rite;
But to subdue the passions, or direct,
And all life's moral duties they neglect.
Most preachers err, except the wiser few,
Thinking established doctrines, therefore, true;
Others, too fond of novelty and schemes,
Amuse the world with airy, idle dreams.
Thus too much faith, or too presuming wit,
Are rocks where bigots or free-thinkers split.

'Tis not enough that what you say is true,
To make us feel it you must feel it too,
Show yourself warm, and that will warmth impart
To every hearer's sympathizing heart."

EPISCOPUS.

Biblical Criticism.

(Continued from p. 51.)

עַל-עָפָר 'āl-'āphār literally signifies *upon the dust*. Umbreit and some interpreters translate עָפָר by *arena, palaestra*, which, as Heiligstedt and Maurer remark, "a linguae usu abhorret;" Ewald and others by *sepulcrum*. Dr. Pye Smith translates by—*over the dust*;—Dr. Lindsay Alexander by—*by [my] dust*. But in the passage before us עַל *al* signifies neither *over* nor *by*, while there is nothing in the original answering to the word "my," interpolated by Dr. Alexander. Bishop H. Browne translates by "*above the dust*;" Jerome by "*de terra*." But עַל *al* signifies strictly and properly *on* or *upon* with the idea of ultimate rest or repose. Hence Heiligstedt and Maurer render עַל-עָפָר by "*super terrā, i.e., in terrā* (apparebit)." Further, Heiligstedt and Maurer, agreeing with Gesenius, make עָפָר *aphar* here signify *terram, orbem terrarum* (cf. v. 6; viii. 19; xxviii. 2; xxx. 6; xxxix. 14; xli. 25), or *the earth*, and not the dust, the former being a usual acceptance of the term in the poetical books of Scripture. Instead therefore of saying *upon the dust*, which would be the literal rendering, we must say with the Authorized Version, *upon the earth*, it being sufficient for us to know that here, as in many other Scriptures, עָפָר is put by poetical usage for the more prosaic term, אֲרֶץ.

יָקֻם yāqūm—he shall arise. This is part of the customary terminology, by which the incarnation is described in the prophetic books. (Cf. Deut. xviii. 15; Jer. xxiii. 5; Ez. xxxiv. 23.) In all these passages the very term employed by the patriarch is applied to the incarnation and advent of Messiah. By some יָקֻם is regarded as a forensic term, and is here held to signify, *he shall ascend* upon the earth, that is,

as if upon a judgment-seat. Jerome wrongly translated it by *surrecturus sum*, since the original is not יקום, but (3 sing. fut. Kal) יקום; and Luther is equally inaccurate, when he renders it by—“*wird mich auferwecken.*” Heiligstedt, with strict accuracy, has—“*Super terrâ surget, i.e., in terrâ apparebit.*”* So also Drs. Henderson and Pye Smith. Here again the Authorized Version, without expressing with extreme nicety the meaning of יקום, has, nevertheless, not erred in any essential particular by the rendering it has adopted.

Third clause (v. 26):—וְאַחַר עוֹרִי נִקְּפוּ-זֶהָ—*vě-ăhhār 'ōrī nīqqəphū-zōth*. The best rendering of this clause is—*And though after my skin, they destroy this*, or according to a well-known idiom:—*After my skin, this* [supply נִיפָה *body*] *be destroyed*. Here וְ is expressive of *enhancement*, and may be rendered by—*and even, and though, and notwithstanding that, yea, immo* (Gesen. Heb. Gr., Pt. III. § 152 a). In the margin עוֹרִי is rendered—I shall awake; but most commentators read עוֹרִי 'ōrī, *my skin*. Thus the Chaldee, Syriac, Septuagint, Vulgate, Herder, Rosenmüller, Gesenius, Heiligstedt, Maurer, Sticelius, Noyes, Goode, Bps. Pearson and Harold Browne, and Drs. Henderson, Pye Smith, and Lindsay Alexander.

נִקְּפוּ-זֶהָ—*nīqqəphū-zōth*—*they destroy this*. There is nothing in the Hebrew answering to the word “worms” in the Authorized Version. Indeed there is, properly speaking, no nominative to נִקְּפוּ. The form here employed is the perf. Piel. of the verb נָקַף *nāqāph* (= *caedere, percutere*), which in the Pi., according to Fürst, signifies *to destroy* (i.e., the skin, the body), and the 3 pers. pl. is employed impersonally (cf. iv. 19; vi. 2; vii. 3). See Heiligstedt,—Maurer *in loco*. Hence, as Dr. Henderson has remarked, the phrase—*they destroy this*, is but an idiomatic mode of saying, “this [supply נִיפָה *body*] *be destroyed*.” Gesenius (Thes. p. 912), and Sticelius (in *Commentario de Goële*, p. 105 sqq), separate זֶהָ from the verb נִקְּפוּ and make it the nominative to the verb substantive in the fut., which, not existing in the text, they supply to fill

* *Comment. Gramm. Hist. Crit. (Maureri Comm. in I. T. Vol. IV.), p. 135.*

up the hiatus which they have themselves created. To complete this construction they also find it necessary to supply the relative pronoun **אֲשֶׁר** as the object of the verb **יִקְרְבוּ**. This construction has been adopted by Dr. L. Alexander, whose rendering will sufficiently illustrate the positions of Gesenius and Stickelius. Dr. Alexander translates—"even after my skin [which] they shall devour, this [shall be.]" We ask, what shall be? Gesenius answers that, namely, which has been already described in the 25th verse. But such an interpretation makes the text more obscure and elliptical than it really is, and that in the face of all ordinary principles of interpretation. Stickelius afterwards, indeed (in *Commentario in Jobum*, p. 166), taking a yet different view of **זֹאת**, makes it signify—*thus, in this manner*, and translates the clause as follows:—"Und nach meiner Haut, [die] durchlöchert wird *diesermassen*." Here the relative pronoun is supplied unnecessarily, as before, and **זֹאת** *zōth* is translated by *diesermassen*. But over against this rendering it is sufficient to say with Heiligstedt that **זֹאת** never = **כֵּן**, **כָּזֶה**, **כְּזֹאת**.* Here again then our Authorized Version is substantially correct. The language of the patriarch points first to the destruction of his skin, and then next of his body, by the disease then afflicting him, and the Authorized Version has kept faithfully to this in the main, having merely had recourse to a harmless device by the use of the word "worms," in order to the better explanation, as was thought, of the peculiar idiomatic employment in the original of the impersonal verb of the 3 pers. plural. See observations on **יִקְרְבוּ** as above.

Fourth clause (v. 26):—**וְיִמְכְּשָׁרִי אֶחְיֶה אֱלֹהִים**—*ū-mibbēsārī 'ēhhēzeh 'ēlōāh*. This rendered literally is—*yet from out of my flesh shall I see God*. Here **וְ** *u* is allowably adversative in signification, and is here properly rendered by *yet*. And the whole clause has the following meaning:—*yet (i.e., notwithstanding that first my skin and then my whole body shall have been destroyed—see the third clause, v. 26), from out of my flesh shall I see God*.

* *Comment. Gramm. Hist. Crit. in Jobum*, p. 136.

מִבְּשָׂרִי *mib-bēsārī* is rendered by Jerome by *in carne mea*, a rendering which has been closely followed by Luther—in *meinem Fleisch*—and the Authorized Version, which has *in my flesh*. It has been, however, rightly objected that מִן *min* does not, like בִּי *bē*, signify *in*, but *from* or *from out of*. Some modern interpreters, as Rosenmüller (in the I. Edit. of his *Scholia* in V.T.), Heiligstedt, Maurer, Barnes, translate מִן *min* by *without*; but the references given in support of such an interpretation have the effect rather of overthrowing it. Such an interpretation is indeed untenable; and it is highly satisfactory to find that Rosenmüller, in the second edition of his “*Scholia*,” entirely repudiated it. He there translates מִבְּשָׂרִי by “*e carne mea, i.e., e corpore meo redintegrato* ;” and maintains that the phrase in question denotes, not separation from the body, but rather such a presence within it as that the body itself should become the *terminus a quo*—the starting-point, of the patriarch’s vision, when hereafter he should “see God.” Cf. Solom. Song ii. 9—מִן-הַחֲלֹנוֹת מִשְׁגִּיחַ—for an analogous employment of this preposition.

אֶחְזֶה אֱלֹהִים *ehhēzē ʾēlōah*. Here אֶחְזֶה refers to bodily, not mental vision, as is abundantly evident from the expression וַיַּיַּרְאָה in the immediate context. It is surely by no accidental coincidence that this is exactly what our Lord promises to “the pure in heart,” namely, that “they shall see God”—τὸν Θεὸν ὁψονταί. Matt. v. 8. But how is this to become attainable? “No man hath seen God at any time.”—John i. 18. It is attainable only upon the supposition of the holy incarnation. God can be seen only in His only begotten Son.* The language, both of the patriarch and of our Saviour, evidently, therefore, presupposes the mystery of godliness—God manifest in the flesh (1 Tim. iii. 16); and the אֱלֹהִים of our text, like the Θεός, whom the pure in heart shall see, is none other person than the Messiah—the Divine *Goël* spoken of by the patriarch in the 25th verse. It is also noteworthy that in Job and in St. Matthew this vision of God with the

* Cf. Olshausen—Comment. on the Gospels, vol. i., p. 195, *note*. Clark, Edin.

bodily eyes is deferred to a remote future, manifestly not anterior to the resurrection.

Fifth clause (v. 27):—אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי וְאֶחָדָם לִי—*āshēr ānī ēhhēzē-lī*. Literally, *whom I shall see for myself*. The only question in this clause, concerning which any difference of opinion exists, is as to the meaning of the expression לִי *li*. Jerome renders the sense by *ego ipse*, Luther by *werde ich mir sehen*, and our Authorized Version by *for myself*. In this translation, Goode, Lindsay Alexander, Bishop Browne, Bishop Pearson, Barnes, and most commentators concur. And this is incontestably correct. Heiligstedt, Maurer, Pye Smith, and others suppose that אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי לִי signifies *videbo mihi*, i.e., *mihi propitium*. Dr. Pye Smith renders the clause to the same effect—*whom I shall see on my behalf*. To this view it must be objected that it supposes an ellipsis where none exists, and that, this being thus effected, a meaning is attached to the expression which is out of harmony with the context. The idea, upon which in the verse before us the patriarch is even anxious to insist, is, that in spite of the absolute dissolution of his bodily frame, which (v. 26) he contemplated as inevitable and perhaps imminent, he himself in his proper personality, and with his own bodily eyes, should see God. The expressions, אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי לִי—*ēynī rāū—*and לֹא־זָר are but varied statements of this one grand idea—an idea involving no less sublime a hope than that of a beatific resurrection from the grave. Our Authorized Version has, therefore, rightly conceived and accurately expressed the sense of the expression in question.

Sixth clause (v. 27):—וְאֶינִי וְאֶחָדָם לִי—*vē-ēynāy rāū vē-lō-zār*. Literally—*and mine eyes shall behold and no stranger*. וְאֶינִי לִי—The Vulgate has—*et oculi mei conspecturi sunt*; Luther—*und meine Augen werden ihn schauen*; Authorized Version—*and mine eyes shall behold*. וְאֶינִי is properly employed to express bodily vision: and that this was the idea of the patriarch is placed beyond dispute by his use of the word וְאֶינִי—“mine eyes.” Rosenmüller aptly remarks:—“*Jobus spem quam fovebat, se oculis corporis sui instaurati adspecturum Deum, verbis clarissimis declarat.*”*

* Scholia in Vet. Test. in loco.

וְלֹא-זָר—*vēlō-zār*, literally, *and no stranger, i.e., and not another*. וְ as Heiligstedt observes = *alienus, i.e., alius*. (Cf. Prov. xiv. 20; xxvii. 2). Our Authorized Version is, therefore, right. Some expositors, as Dathe, Gesenius, Umbreit, Stickelius, and Pye Smith treat וְ as in the accusative, and refer it to God, rendering וְלֹא-זָר as follows:—"et non alienum, i.e., non inimicum mihi." Thus Dr. P. Smith—and *not estranged*. But for reasons already stated the version above adopted is in every way preferable. Here, therefore, also, the Authorized Version is again right.

(To be continued.)

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

TRUE SOCIAL LOVE.

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."—John xiii. 34.

THESE words lead us to consider true social love, the love that men ought to have for their fellow creatures.

I. Its MODEL. How should man love his brother? Here is the answer—"As I have loved you."

First: *Initially*. Christ loved man before man loved him. "Herein is love; not that we loved Him, but that He loved us." Because others do not love us, it is no excuse for not loving them.

Secondly: *Practically*. His love did not evaporate in sentiment, did not exhaust itself in speech. (1.) His love expressed itself in His works. In His life "He went about

doing good." (2.) His love expressed itself in His death.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

"Scarcely for a righteous man will one die."

Thirdly: *Constantly*. His love is an everlasting love. "The mountains shall depart and the hills be removed," &c. Thus we are to love each other. This is the model. We are not to hate men; we may hate their characters, but not their being. We are not to love them with a passing feeling but with a practical affection.

II. Its OBLIGATION. "A new commandment I give you." It is a "*commandment*," not a suggestion, not an advice. And it is a *new* commandment. How is it new?

First: It is new to the

world's *idea*. Plato, in his *Republic*, asked the question, If when a poor man is ill, whether it is our duty to help him? and the answer is *no*, because he is not worth the trouble. And Celsus, the famous antagonist to Christianity, declared that "it must be nothing short of madness to believe that Greeks and barbarians, Europe, Asia, and Libya, can ever be united in the bond of a common religion." "To love one another" is a new idea. It had no residence in the brain of men of past times.

Secondly: It is new to the world's *feeling*. To love men as Christ loved them was an affection which but very few of even the best of men of ancient times ever experienced.

Thirdly: It is new to the world's *practice*. Point me to any age preceding the Christian, where love built schools to educate the ignorant, infirmaries for the diseased, asylums for the poor, refuges for the destitute: or point me, even in modern times, to any part of heathendom where such institutions exist.

PERSONAL CHRISTIANITY A DOMINION.

"The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."—Matt. xi. 12.

THE meaning of this is, since the days that John began to preach—since he began to call the world to re-

pentance, there has been a rush into the kingdom of heaven. Men, roused from their spiritual slumbers—startled by a sense of their sin and ruin, have earnestly applied for pardon and salvation. The echo of the words he proclaimed on the Jordan still lingers and rings in the souls of men, and the result is a pressing every day into the empire of redemptive truth.* Two thoughts are suggested by the passage.

I. PERSONAL CHRISTIANITY IS A CELESTIAL REIGN. "The kingdom of heaven." Christianity is not a ritualistic code, nor a speculative creed, but a celestial rule; it controls the thoughts, affections, and activities of the mind. It brings into captivity every thought, &c. It is the kingdom of heaven, because it brings heaven's spirits, heaven's aims, heaven's laws, with all their regal force, into the soul. Under this celestial rule the soul has three great blessings:—

First: *Liberty*. It is the rule of love; the soul is made willing to obey; under this rule it enjoys the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Secondly: *Protection*. That is the best government on earth that not only ensures the liberties, but protects the lives, interests, and property

* For an exposition of the context see "Genius of the Gospel," page 217.

of the subjects. The soul under this Christian imperialism is safely guarded, guarded by angels, by Omnipotence.

Thirdly: *Progress*. One of the best means of ascertaining the excellency of any government is the facilities it affords for the advancement of its citizens. The soul under the celestial rule of Christianity passes on from strength to strength, from glory to glory. Christianity, if not *dominant* in a man, is worse than nothing.

II. Into this celestial kingdom ENTRANCE CAN ONLY BE OBTAINED BY EARNEST EFFORT.

"It suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."

"Violence" here, of course, does not mean cruelty, nor does "force" mean brute might; the words must be regarded as standing for mighty earnestness. Nor can man enter into this celestial state of soul without this; he has to fight his way into it.

First: Fight against the *opposing forces within*. Carnality, pride, unbelief, prejudice, moral inertia.

Secondly: Fight against *social influences*. The world around us, like a heavy atmosphere, presses down the pinions of the soul.

Thirdly: Fight against *infernal agencies*. We must "wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, and powers, and wickedness in high places."

CONCLUSION.—Is Christian-

ity a regal force within you? Does it dominate all within, direct your forces and control your activities? If not, you are in the kingdom of darkness, the kingdom of bondage, danger, misery. In the name of all that is great in human nature, rational in action, righteous in Divine claims, determine to change your government, break away from the old and struggle into the new. Make your way upwards, for the "kingdom of heaven suffereth violence."

HUMAN VOLITION.

"Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other."—Matt. xii. 13.

We learn from this incident—

I. That man has the power of volition, whatever may be his PHYSICAL CIRCUMSTANCES. Here is a man with a withered hand, in whom Christ recognised the power of willing. Man in poverty, bondage, physical exhaustion, can will.

II. That the will of Christ should in all cases control HIS VOLITIONS. This man recognised the fact. He did not say, I cannot do it; my circumstances, my physical weakness, the thorough powerlessness of my withered arm prevent the possibility of my doing it. He recognised the authority of Christ's will, and he did according to the mandate.

III. That the man whose

volitions are controlled by the will of Christ MAY EXTRICATE HIMSELF FROM CONDITIONS THE MOST WRETCHED. This man obeyed Christ, and his volition sent life, blood, energy, into his withered hand. Let the most wretched man do this, and he will rise from his wretchedness. Let the world, deeply sunk as it is in moral weakness, degradation, do this, and it shall rise to power, dignity, and peace.

“THE BEAM AND THE MOTE.”

“Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.”—Matt. vii. 5.

THERE are three facts contained in this verse.

I. THAT SIN MAY EXIST IN MAN TO AN ENORMOUS EXTENT, AND YET HE BE UNCONSCIOUS OF IT. There may be a “beam” in the eye, or the soul, which hinders the light of heaven from illuminating the inner chambers, and the man may not know it. This is one of the darkest facts in connexion with depravity. There are several things that tend to produce this unconsciousness.

(1.) *Habit.* Man begins his moral history in sin; he has no period of virtuous experience. All is one unbroken course of evil until the hour of moral conviction come. Sin, therefore, by habit, becomes so much like a part of his nature, that he is unconscious

of it. (2.) *Association.* If, in every-day life he was called to mingle with the pure and the good, he would be painfully reminded by contrast of his spiritual error and delinquencies; but, instead of this, all are of the same depraved class as himself. They breathe the same air, adopt the same maxims, and follow out the same principles; and (3.) *Satanic Agency.* The god of this world is employed in blinding the eyes of men.

Another fact in this verse is—

II. THAT HOWEVER UNCONSCIOUS OF OUR OWN SINS, WE MAY BE ALIVE TO THE SINS OF OTHERS. The Scribes and Pharisees, though they could not see the “beam” in their own eye, discovered the “mote” in the eye of others. The fact shows—

First: *That sin does not destroy the faculty for discerning moral distinctions.* This faculty is preserved in hell. The fact shows—

Secondly: *The importance of Christians being circumspect in their conduct.* The world has an eye to see your defects.

Another fact in this verse is—

III. THAT SELF-IMPROVEMENT IS A NECESSARY QUALIFICATION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF OTHERS. “First cast out the beam out of thine own eye,” &c. David expresses this idea in one of his Penitential Psalms, “Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me

with Thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto Thee." "Thou, therefore, which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that preachest

a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?"



Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. CCXCII.)

Subject : INTELLIGENT GOODNESS.

"Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established: and by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches. A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength. For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counsellors there is safety. Wisdom is too high for a fool: he openeth not his mouth in the gate." —Prov. xxiv. 3-7.

WE shall take wisdom here, not only as representing piety, but piety in association with intelligence and skill. Goodness of a certain sort is sometimes found in connexion with great ignorance and stupidity, the mind is unenlightened by knowledge and unskilled by discipline. And there is, on the other hand, often found a "wisdom" detached from goodness and piety. Examples abound in history, and also in living society, of men of great intelligence, high culture, and ingenious aptitudes, who are destitute of any goodness of the heart, in the Bible sense. These two should be always wedded together, "the twain should be

one." Where they are thus united we have what I have designated *intelligent goodness*. The text suggests some of the advantages connected with this.

I. It is conducive to WEALTH. "Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established: and by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches." The three words, "Wisdom," "Understanding," and "Knowledge," are, in the meaning of Solomon, synonymous; they signify an *enlightened* religion, and this is conducive to secular prosperity. An unenlightened piety often leads to starvation, an unsanctified intelligence to ruin and misery; but when both are combined there is the guarantee of secular advancement.

Enlightened piety involves all the conditions of worldly success, *temperance, economy, industry, skilfulness, and the favour of Heaven*. The Heavenly Teacher intimated this when He said, "Seek first the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness, and all things shall be added

unto you;" and Paul recognised this when he said, "Godliness is profitable unto all things, it has the promise of the life which now is, and of the life which is to come."

II. It is conducive to POWER. "A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength."

First: *Intelligence apart from piety is power.* A man who has great intelligence and who knows how to use it, possesses a power superior to any physical force. Knowledge is power; this is a proposition that has been crystallized into a proverb. It is beyond debate, it lies sparkling in the region of acknowledged certitudes.

Secondly: *Piety apart from intelligence is a higher kind of power.* It is the power of patience, endurance, love, compassion; it is a power that will touch men's hearts and move the very arm of God; it "takes hold upon His strength."

Thirdly: *Piety associated with intelligence is the highest creature power.* What power on earth is equal to that possessed by the man of vast intelligence and consecrated affections, the man of sunny intellect and Heaven-inspired sympathies?

III. It is conducive to SAFETY. "For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war; and in multitude of counsellors there is safety." How in times of danger does it conduce to safety? The words suggest two ways—

First: *It takes counsel of the wise.* "By wise counsel thou shalt make thy war," &c. Nothing exposes a man to greater danger than such an overweening conceit of his own

opinions and such a feeling of self-sufficiency as prevent him from taking counsel of the wise. Self-willed monarchs have ruined kingdoms and brought damnation on themselves. The men of enlightened godliness take counsel of the holiest men and of the great God Himself.

Secondly: *It has power at the gate.* "Wisdom is too high for a fool; he openeth not his mouth in the gate." The "gate" here may mean the place of public assembly or the place of entrance into the city. In either position, the man of enlightened piety will have power. When he opens his mouth and speaks in the assembly men will listen to his words and bow to his opinion; or if he stands at the gate and opens his mouth when the enemy is advancing, the moral majesty of his aspect and the force of his utterances will drive the invader back more effectively than the swords or bayonets of armies.

(No. CCXCIII.)

Subject: ASPECTS OF DEPRAVITY.

"He that deviseth to do evil shall be called a mischievous person. The thought of foolishness is sin: and the scorner is an abomination to men."—Prov. xxiv. 8, 9.

THE man who has the Bible in his hand cannot say that he has no means of knowing what is good and evil, what characters God will accept and what He will reject. In this Book of books the evil and the good are exhibited in such a variety and fulness of aspect as to render it impossible for men to make a mistake on the momentous subject. Depravity is presented to us in the text—

I. AS MISCHIEVOUS IN PUR-

POSE. "He that deviseth to do evil shall be called a mischievous person." It is bad enough to be *inclined* to evil; it is worse to *yield* to evil, it is worse still to *devise* evil; to use that intellect that God has given us in constructing schemes of wickedness.

First: This is the work of the *devil*. His gigantic intellect has ever been thus employed, (Gen. iii. 1.) and he is thus engaged at this moment. He is everlastingly constructing schemes of wickedness, and we should not be "ignorant of his devices."

Secondly: This is the work to which he inspires all his followers. Balaam was a mischievous person. (Numbers xxxi. 16.) Abimelech earned the same reputation (Judges ix.) Jeroboam's mischief has stamped his name with a black mark of reprobation — "who made Israel to sin." (1 Kings xii. 22-33.) The heathens of the ancient world are represented as "inventors of evil things" (Romans ix.) All wicked men are desirous of mischief. They are hatching schemes of evil.

II. As SINFUL IN THOUGHT. "The thought of foolishness is sin." The idea is, that every evil thought is sin. How can this be? How can such an intangible fugitive thing as thought be a sin? Sinful thought is of two classes.

First: *Voluntary*. These consist (1.) In a voluntary meditation on wrong subjects; such subjects as those which tend to incite lust, avarice, revenge, impiety. (2.) In a voluntary meditation on right subjects in a wrong way. Those who take

up the great facts of nature, Providence, and the Bible, in order to throw discredit on the existence, wisdom, and goodness of God; and those also who study those facts for infidel, sectarian, or selfish ends are alike guilty of sinful thoughts.

Secondly: *Involuntary*. There are thoughts that come into us, not only irrespective of our choice, but against our very wish; how can we be responsible for them? How? They have grown up out of previous voluntary states of mind; we made the soil from which they have sprung, and thus heaven holds us responsible.

Let us be careful of that from which bad thoughts spring. "The cockatrice's egg," says John Howe, "if long enough hatched becomes a serpent, and therefore ought to be crushed in time."

III. As ABHORRENT IN CHARACTER. "The scorner is an abomination to men." Evil devices, sinful thoughts, and a scorning spirit are all elements of depravity. We have often had occasion to define the "scorner" in passing through this book. The man who "sits in the scorner's seat" has reached the nearest chair to hell. Such a character, we have been assured elsewhere, is an abomination to God, and here we are told is an abomination to men. Men may laugh at the sarcastic wit, applaud the dexterous shafts of ridicule, but inwardly they despise the author. Such a man the human soul cannot trust, cannot love, must recoil from with a profound disgust.

CONCLUSION.—Depart from evil and pursue good, flee from sin as Lot fled from Sodom, and

escape to the mountain of purity and truth, the only safe refuge and congenial home of soul.

(No. CCXCIV.)

Subject: THE DAY OF ADVERSITY.

"If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small."—Prov. xxiv. 10.

Two thoughts are here suggested:—

I. THERE IS A DAY OF ADVERSITY FOR ALL. Man is born to trouble as sparks fly upward.

First: He meets a day of adversity in every *part* of his life. In his *body*, physical diseases; in his *intellect*, agonising problems; in his *conscience*, moral convulsions.

Secondly: He meets a day of adversity in every *relation* of his life. In his *secular* relations, trials, and disappointments in his business; in his *social* relations, abused confidence, false friendships, agonising bereavements, &c.

Thirdly: He meets a day of adversity in the *end* of his life. the day of death awaits all, and a trying day it is. What a day is that! How cloudy, how tumultuous, how frigid, how desolate!

II. THE DAY OF ADVERSITY IS A TRIAL OF MORAL STRENGTH. It is by adversity that our moral strength is tried; thus God tried Abraham, and he turned out to be strong in moral faith; thus God tried Peter, and he turned out to be weak, and fell. We want strength for the day of adversity: that strength of faith in God that shall make us resigned, patient, invincible.

CONCLUSION. Brother, the day of adversity awaits thee. If thou hast not strength to bear up, it will overwhelm thee. Prepare for it, repair to the

source of strength, God; "He giveth power to the faint; to him that hath no power He increaseth strength."

(No. CCXCV.)

Subject: THE NEGLECT OF SOCIAL BENEVOLENCE.

"If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not He that pondereth the heart consider it? and He that keepeth thy soul, doth not He know it? and shall not He render to every man according to his works?"—Prov. xxiv. 11, 12.

THE subject of these words is the neglect of social benevolence; and we notice three things—

I. The neglect DESCRIBED. "If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain." Two things are here implied.

First: The *existence* of men in distress. There are men "drawn to death;" men "ready to be slain," now as well as in the days of Solomon; there are men around us here in England who are being slain by disease, oppression, poverty, and starvation.

Secondly: The *duty towards* men in distress. The duty is to try and deliver them, grapple with their diseases, crush their oppressors, mitigate their poverty, stay their starvation. Every man should endeavour, in the midst of so much distress, to act as a deliverer, a redeemer.

II. The neglect EXCUSED. "If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not." This is an excuse that is now often pleaded for doing nothing. Men say, We don't know that such misery exists; we are not sure that the case is

a deserving one. Their ignorance in this matter is always voluntary; they don't wish to know; they shut their eyes to it; and when they are told that men have died of want, they say, "We knew it not."

First: Such ignorance is *no justifiable* excuse. The means of knowledge are abundant. The columns of every day's newspaper are laden with intelligence on the subject.

Secondly: Such ignorance is *itself a sin*. Every man is bound to know the state of society in which he lives; if there is distress, he should find it out. Job said, "The cause which I knew not, I searched out," and every citizen is bound to do the same.

III. The neglect PUNISHED. "Doth not He that pondereth the heart consider it? and He that keepeth thy soul, doth not He know it? and shall not He render to every man according to his works?" There are three

facts here that the neglecter of social deliverance should ponder well.

First: God *knows* thee. "Doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it; doth not he know it?" Your excuses may do for man, but they will not do for Him; He sees their falsehood; He loathes their hypocrisy.

Secondly: God *preserves* thee. "He that keepeth thy soul." He knows that thou art telling a lie to Him in "whose hand thy breath is, and who knoweth all thy ways."

Thirdly: God *will recompense* thee. "Shall not He render to every man according to his works?" There is a day of judgment coming, when thy hypocrisy shall be exposed, and thy covetousness visited with the retributions of eternity. On that day Christ will say to thee, "Inasmuch as ye have not done it unto the least of these my brethren," &c.

In Memoriam.

ALBERT BARNES, D.D., PHILADELPHIA.

HENRY ALFORD, D.D., DEAN OF CANTERBURY.

TWO excellent men, and illustrious authors, have just joined the mighty dead. The following is a brief sketch of their history:—

"ALBERT BARNES was suddenly called to his rest, in a ripe old age. He died in the city of Philadelphia, on Saturday afternoon, December 24, aged 72. On the previous Saturday he attended the funeral of an esteemed friend. He took part in the services; and in his address dwelt upon the

thought that this life was preparatory to the eternal life, enlarging upon the idea that the death of one who had made preparation for the future world, had accepted Christ, and had by a consistent life given evidence of true godliness, was not to him a calamity—that however sad it might be to his friends, to him it was gain, for the true end of life had been attained. Exactly a week afterwards he, in company with his daughter, paid a visit of condolence to the family. He was as bright, as cheerful, and seemingly as well as ever he had been. Mr. Barnes' residence is at the western limit of West Philadelphia; that of the friends to be visited a mile farther west, and in the country. The day was very cold, with a keen wind from the west. In ascending a hill, Mr. Barnes stopped once or twice to take breath, yet seemed perfectly well. On entering the house, he sat down in an easy-chair, spoke a word to his daughter, then his head fell back, he breathed insensibly for a few moments, and was dead. Without a pain, a pang, a struggle, or a groan, the Christian passed from this world to the world of the blessed, and the presence of the Redeemer.

“Mr. Barnes was a native of Rome, New York; born December 1st, 1798; graduated at Hamilton College in 1820, and at Princeton Seminary in 1824. He was ordained pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Morristown, New Jersey, in February, 1825, where he began his great life-work of preparing Scripture Commentaries for the aid of Sunday schools. In 1830 he was called to the first church of Philadelphia, where he spent the remainder of his diligent and honourable life, only giving over the responsible charge of the church to a colleague two years ago.

“The first ten years of his service in Philadelphia was a time of general revival in religion, into which he entered with his whole soul. In analysing the methods of presenting Divine truth most favourable to revivals, he adopted views of theology decidedly in harmony with those prevailing in New England, which were objected to by the more rigid Presbyterians, who commenced a prosecution against him for heresy, advanced in his book on *Atonement*. The case was carried by appeal

from the Presbytery to the Synod of Philadelphia, and thence to the General Assembly, then meeting at Pittsburg. Here the sentence of suspension was reversed, and he returned to his work, after an enforced silence of a whole year, which he had endured with great patience for the sake of Church order. This prosecution had much to do with the division of the Presbyterian Church, and it was a high satisfaction to Mr. Barnes that he lived to take part in the reunion, and to be welcomed to the fellowship of those from whom he had been causelessly separated for above thirty years, without any humiliating concessions or changes on either part.

“In addition to his Commentaries, and several important religious works, he wrote much for periodicals. He tried his hand in a work on slavery, but failed to lead the public mind to any newer or more effective views. He was a laborious student, with clear and comprehensive views on many subjects, and a lucid and unpretending style, which made his preaching and his writings popular and highly useful. He has rounded out a valuable life, and died full of years and honours, mourned by the wise and good in many lands, who admired and profited by his voluminous writings.”

The Very Rev. HENRY ALFORD, D.D., Dean of Canterbury, died at the Deanery, on the 12th January. A profound feeling of sorrow was felt in Canterbury at the unexpected announcement. It was shared in by all sects of religion as well as political parties, for he was beloved as well as admired. The Dean preached as usual in the Cathedral on Sunday, and on Monday presided at a meeting of clergy and gentry to distribute a fund for the relief of the poor. He then complained of not being well (as, indeed, he had not been for some time), but no serious results were apprehended by any of his friends at that time. On Tuesday his medical adviser, Mr. Hallowes, a local surgeon, was sent for, but his skill was unavailing, for rapid congestion of the lungs set in, and Dr. Alford expired at a quarter before two o'clock on Thursday afternoon. At four o'clock the tolling of the “great bell” at the Cathedral communicated the sad tidings to the citizens.

Whatever their school of thought and religious opinion, all our readers will learn with regret the news of Dean Alford's death. The son of respectable parents, he was born in London in 1810, and, having received the greater part of his early education at the Grammar School at Ilminster, in Somerset, was entered at Trinity College, where he gained a Scholarship and took his B.A. and M.A. degrees. We gather some few particulars about his early life from a poem addressed to him by the friend of his youth, Mr. Moultrie, of Rugby; and it is certain that his first publication, which was in verse, was issued from the press while he was still at Cambridge, we believe as early as 1831, under the title of *Poems and Poetical Fragments*. This was followed by *The School of the Heart, and other Poems*, in two volumes, which has gone through several editions both here and in America. From a Scholarship at Trinity Dr. Alford was elected in 1834 to a Fellowship, and from the following year, soon after his ordination as a priest, down to 1853, he held the College living of Wymeswold, Leicestershire, a benefice rated in the current *Clergy List* at £191 a year, where he eked out his narrow clerical income by taking pupils. In 1841 and the following year he preached the "Hulsean Lectures" at Cambridge, and about the same time published a work on the *Poets of Ancient Greece*. For many years from this date he also held the post of Examiner in Logic and Moral Philosophy in the University of London. His life at this time must have been more than ordinarily laborious, as is clear from the fact that over the next fifteen or twenty years of his life were spread the successive volumes of his Greek Testament, with a revised text and commentaries or English readers—a work on the merits of which it is superfluous to speak to either scholars or theologians. In 1853 Dr. Alford was appointed incumbent of Quebec Chapel, near Portman Square, where he gained a high reputation by the eloquence of his preaching, and the breadth of his religious views. Four years later, Lord Palmerston recommended him for the Deanery of Canterbury, vacant by the death of Dr. Lyall. Since that time his name has been constantly before the world as the author of articles upon religious and

literary topics in the *Contemporary Review*, *Good Words*, and other publications of the day. His name will also be remembered in connexion with controversies respecting "moot points" in English grammar.

The testimony of the *Guardian*, an ecclesiastical opponent of his, although of the same Church, is worth quoting :—

"His various attempts to manifest sympathy with Nonconformists, to draw them nearer to us, and remove some of the barriers which so fatally divide the great mass of English Christianity, might occasionally be dangerous in concession of principles, and for that very reason fail in attaining their object, while they caused offence to old-fashioned Churchmen. But his action always showed a hatred of abuse and narrowness, and an earnest desire for true efficiency. . . . The late Dean knew that the Church must show powers of self-government and self-adaptation, so as to harmonize with all that is true and good in modern thought, and rise to grapple with difficulties which earlier times did not produce, and could not have understood. He felt that if the Church is to remain the National Church of England, she must do something more to be the Church of all England—must at least consider what she can do to meet the needs of Christians alienated from her communion, and to leaven the great masses of men to whom now even Christianity is but a name. We cannot doubt that he was right, and, even where we cannot agree with the means suggested, we honour men who are thus deeply and earnestly alive to our great spiritual needs."

Such are some of the facts connected with the history of the two great men whom the universal Church has lost, and who have passed from earth to heaven. The resemblance between them in many respects is remarkably striking. They were both men richly gifted with mental powers of a high order—strong common sense, keen judgment, clear intuitions, and lively fancy. We scarcely know of a mental attribute possessed by one which the other had not in an equal measure. Both consecrated their exalted powers to sacred studies and pulpit labour. The ripe and rich scholarship which, by indefatigable labour they attained, was employed in the elucidation and enforcement of that Word which giveth life to souls. Both were authors in the same school of thought—reapers in those heavenly fields where grow the bread of everlasting life. Both were men of extensive fame; by their literary productions their figures had grown large and commanding in

the wide horizon of Biblical studies. Both had a Catholicity of soul which overflowed the boundaries of the ecclesiastical systems to which they belonged. Barnes was persecuted by his Presbyterian fraternity, and Alford denounced as a heretic by the two great parties of his own Church. Christianity is a sublimer thing than Presbyterianism, Episcopacy, or any other system of human mould. Great souls cannot live in 'isms'—they must break through them into the free air of truth and there work, if they are to work at all. Both nobly served their generation, and bequeathed a rich legacy to the men of succeeding ages. Men who, like Peabody, leave gold behind them for the poor, deserve a nation's gratitude; but the men who leave noble thoughts behind them, to enlighten the ignorant, renovate the depraved, console the sorrowing, reclaim the lost, render a sublimer service—a service more lasting and more wide. Both being dead yet speak. The earthen bodies in which their souls lived, and grew, and wrought here for a few years, have gone back to their mother dust, but the volumes in which they embodied their sentiments and inbreathed their spirit, are in ten thousand libraries, and through them they will speak to men of future times.

The departure of such useful men as these solemnly reminds us that the Great Lord is independent of the services of His most faithful and efficient servants. No intelligent creature in the universe, however great in power, high in position, brilliant in service, is necessary to Him. As useful labourers in his vineyards depart, He raises others to take their place, and so the work goes on. Let us be humble; the Church, the world, and the Great Master can do without us. The little work allotted to us let us do with all our might. Let us drop the seeds of truth into the fields entrusted to our culture, resting assured that, under the care of the Great Husbandman, that seed will grow and ripen into fruit, whether we live or die, and that other men will enter the field and carry on the work.

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

SERMONS. By HENRY MELVILL, B.D. In two volumes. Rivingtons: London, Oxford, and Cambridge.

THESE volumes transport us back over a period of many years, when we attended, whenever possible, the ministry of this distinguished preacher. His majestic voice, his consummate elocution, his grand rhetoric, with all the devout fervour that rang through the voice and blazed in the eye, not only charmed our young nature, but often overwhelmed us with the most solemn impressions. The announcement of his name to preach in any church was to us, and thousands more at that time, electric. We have stood with the breathless throng, drinking in his words, in some of the largest and most imposing ecclesiastical buildings of the metropolis. The last time we heard him, some five years ago, in St. Paul's, we were saddened by reflections on the devastating work of time. Years had turned the raven locks into snow, and given a weakness and a tremulousness to that voice which was once voluminous in melodies and force. The sermons before us, some of which we heard in those remote days, in reading fall far beneath the impression we received of them when their words rang in the ear. It is our fault. We have lost faith in some of the things we cordially accepted then. Our ideas of preaching have changed. We have grown more critical: we trust not more hardened. Notwithstanding all, we heartily commend these sermons to our young brethren. They are swords that won brilliant victories in the campaign of souls years ago. The peculiarity and the excellency of the preacher is, that he selects only one point from his text, works that point out by a grand argumentative rhetoric, to the conviction both of the hearer's judgment and conscience.

SERMONS PREACHED IN PLYMOUTH CHURCH, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK. By HENRY WARD BEECHER. Third Series. London: R. D. Dickinson, 59 Old Bailey.

ONE THOUSAND GEMS. From Rev. WARD BEECHER. Edited and Compiled by Rev. G. D. EVANS. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 27 Paternoster Row.

To a large number of people the author of these sermons is considered the greatest preacher in the world: there are others, however, who are

not of that opinion. They complain of his unbounded egotism. They say that there is a swagger in every sentence; that irreverence pervades every passage; that scarcely in a single sermon is there a faithful dealing with the text in hand, or an earnest attempt to bring out the Divine ideas which it contains; that the whole is characterized by reckless utterances given out for effect. Strong Evangelicals are strong in their denunciations of this style of preaching. They say that Mr. Beecher's text is not the Word of God, but men's opinions. "In every sermon, and almost on every page, he takes up what '*men say*.' '*Men say*' this, men say that: it is all about what '*men say*.' They must be great talkers in America, and Mr. Beecher must be ever listening to them." Now, we are far enough from holding Mr. Beecher up as a model preacher, or as an effective expounder of God's Holy Word, but we are also far enough from sympathizing with his detractors. He is undoubtedly a man of distinguished ability; and in the faculty of perceiving analogies, and the power of saying most striking things in a striking way, he is, perhaps, unsurpassed by any living man. We should not read his sermons in order to get at the real meaning of the text, nor even to get our nature baptized with the spirit of reverence and devotion, but we know of few writers who can better quicken thought, excite fancy, and indicate effective methods of speech.

His "ONE THOUSAND GEMS" ("Gems"—we hate the word; all men have gems now) are very choice conceptions, embodied in telling speech. They are extracts from the choicest portions of his choicest sermons, and they are, therefore, very valuable.

COMMENTARY ON THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS. By FRANZ DELITZCH, D.D. Translated from German, by THOMAS L. KINSBURY, M.A. Vol. II. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 38 George Street.

WE have already noticed the first volume of this Work. It is decidedly one of the most learned expositions extant on the Epistle; indeed, it seems to us to contain a superfluous amount of verbal scholarship. We have recently received so many Commentaries upon this Epistle, that we are almost afraid that it will be clouded by over much explanation. However, no preacher is justified in discoursing on a text without first thoroughly examining into its meaning, he may find one exegete supplement the deficiency of another. As we have already characterized and recommended the Work, we need say no more.

NOTICES OF THE JEWS BY THE CLASSIC WRITERS OF ANTIQUITY. Being a Collection of Facts and Opinions from the Works of Ancient Heathen Authors previous to A.D. 500. By JOHN GILL. London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer.

"THE object of the following Essay," says the author, "being literary, and not theological, only such comments have been made upon the texts

introduced as seemed required on the ground of historical fairness. It was found impossible to make a perfectly distinctive classification of extracts, but it is hoped that the one which has been adopted, and which proceeds according to the subject matter rather than the order of time, will prove sufficient for its purpose. The quotations from the Greek and Latin writers are presented in a translated form, for the convenience of general English readers." The libel on the Jewish people written by Schiller, in his "Mission of Moses," wherein he states that the Jewish people became affected with an ineradicable leprosy, in consequence of their close herding together in the province of Goshen, given to them by the King of Egypt, and that it was only as a detested leprous people that they were known by the most celebrated authors of antiquity, is here triumphantly refuted. No less than forty-nine ancient authorities are here quoted, whose statements contradict the testimony of the illustrious German writer, and go to show the unanimity with which heathen authors of remotest times bear testimony to the religious isolation of the Jews, and their attachment to their Monotheistic principles and their sacred rites. No one but a scholar could have written a book of this kind, and no one but a sincere lover of historic truth would have taken the trouble to do so. The conception, execution, and aim of this work do great honour to the author's scholarship, literary aptitudes, and loyalty to truth.

OUR FEATHERED COMPANIONS. By Rev. THOMAS JACKSON, M.A. London : S. W. Partridge and Co., 9 Paternoster Row.

THIS volume forms the third of a series, of which that entitled "Our Dumb Companions" was the first. The object of these works is most praiseworthy and important. It is to check and overcome that cruelty to dumb animals of which man has been guilty from the earliest times until now. The English law punishes those who are apprehended committing flagrant acts of cruelty, but legislation can not do much. Education is the only effective remedy. Indoctrinating the young mind with humane views, and a sympathetic interest in irrational creatures, is the best instrumentality that can be employed. This is the object of such works as that before us. "OUR FEATHERED COMPANIONS" is an exquisite production; the illustrations, the letterpress, the paper, the type, the binding, all are of the first class. We heartily recommend this work; every parent who can afford it should present a copy of it to his children.

THE SPIRITUAL DOCTRINE OF HADES. By Rev. GEORGE BARTLE, D.D. London : Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer.

THE author tells us that this work comprises an "inquiry into the state of the righteous and wicked dead between death and the general judg-

ment ; with a demonstration from the Bible that the redemption of the world was accomplished in the Prison of Hades, and not by the Death of Christ on the Cross." There is so much in this book that is worth reading, and so much that is debateable, that, as our space is too limited to do it justice, we can only say to our readers that they should procure it, and carefully examine it. The following extracts may indicate the tenor of the work :—"The three states of the righteous may be thus distinguished—In this world *Faith* is the leading feature ; in Hades, *Hope* ; in Heaven, *Love* ; while the condition of the wicked is characterized by *Unbelief* on earth ; *Despair* in Hades ; and *Hatred* in Hell." "In Hades, then, at this moment, are all the souls that have ever lived in this world. Hades one day may be our abode, until that joyous and dreadful hour when the blast of the archangel's trumpet shall sound in the astonished ears of the living and the dead at the resurrection morning. And God in His infinite mercy grant that we may be in the number of those who are now in the bosom of Abraham."

COUSIN MABEL'S EXPERIENCES. Sketches of Religious Life in England.
By Miss E. J. WHATELEY.

ANIMAL LIFE IN EUROPE. Illustrated with Coloured Plates by F.
SPECHT.

THE COTTAGE AND ARTIZAN, FOR 1870.

THE CHILD'S COMPANION AND JUVENILE INSTRUCTOR, FOR 1870.

TILL THE DOCTOR COMES, AND HOW TO HELP HIM. By GEORGE M.
HOPE, M.D.

THE COTTAGE ON THE SHORE : OR LITTLE GWEN'S STORY.

ALICE LEIGH'S MISSION. The Religious Tract Society, 56 Paternoster
Row.

WE have put these works together, not on the principle of affinity, but because they are issued from the same house.

COUSIN MABEL'S EXPERIENCES.—The articles in this volume were written separately, and some of them at considerable intervals of time. This must unavoidably give them a somewhat desultory character, though they have been hung, as it were, on a slender thread to connect them together. The scenes described though clothed in a fictitious dress, and, of course, modified and arranged to suit the imaginary character of the whole, are chiefly painted from life ; and the principal incidents are, in their main features, strictly true. The object of this volume is to point out some of the dangers and temptations which beset the path of those who profess to be actuated by a higher principle than that of the world. It is an admirable work, well written, and fertile with useful thought.

ANIMAL LIFE IN EUROPE.—This is a work brimful of Natural History. The illustrations, which are coloured according to the hue of the animal described, are most beautiful and striking. The literary descriptions are good; they are truthful and interesting. It is just the book for the young.

THE COTTAGER AND ARTIZAN FOR 1870.—Has a large portrait of our Queen, in which she does not appear very interesting or queen-like. It has also many other illustrations of animals and men, with good anecdotes pertaining to both.

THE CHILD'S COMPANION AND JUVENILE INSTRUCTOR FOR 1870.—This work is very much like Rev. Erskine Clark's "Children Prize," although its illustrations are very inferior. The object, of course, is to interest children, and it will do so usefully.

TILL THE DOCTOR COMES.—This is really a work of such importance to every family and every individual, that we doubt not it will be procured as soon as its existence is known.

THE COTTAGE ON THE SHORE: or, Little Gwen's Story.—An excellent tale, well told, with a good moral for children.

ALICE LEE'S MISSION.—This is also a tale similar to the one just mentioned, equally interesting and useful.

THE HOMILIST. Vol. ii. Editor's Series; vol. xxvii. from commencement. Conducted by DAVID THOMAS, D.D. London: Simpkin and Marshall.

THIS volume contains about EIGHTY-NINE sermons, more or less elaborate. Besides these sermons, there are various articles on other general subjects—"Variations on Themes from Scripture," by Francis Jacox, B.A.; "The Preacher's Dissecting Room," by Mathematicus, M.A., in which notices of the following ministers are given:—Revs. C. J. Vaughan, D.D., John Ker, Stopford Brooke, and T. Binney; "Biblical Criticism," containing articles from the pen of J. B. Lightfoot, D.D., W. Lindsay, D.D.; "Pulpit and its Handmaids," containing articles from E. S. Dallas, W. Benton Clulow, F. W. Farrar, M.A., F.R.S. This volume contains productions from the pen of some of the most eminent theological writers in England, and is considered to be equal in every particular to the first volume of the series, which is pronounced by competent judges to be the best that has appeared of the *Homilist*.



A HOMILY

ON

Mount Hermon; or, Lessons from Christ's Transfiguration.

"Then answered Peter and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here; if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles."—Matt. xviii. 4.

THE transfiguration is the most dazzling outward scene to the student and beholder in the life of Christ. It was like a sublime coronation hour! Glory lit up the face of Christ until it dazzled the disciples. They stood awe-struck. Peter was ecstatic, entranced—its strange magnificence dazed him.

Peter's feelings, however, may be understood by a study of the exclamation he made—"Lord, it is good for us to be here; if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles."

On studying these words we shall find—

I. *They reveal a blessed truth about all our times and acts of communion with Christ.*

It matters not where we get the vision. Some have found a Mount Hermon in their solitary retirement in the home. Whilst musing alone, "the fire has kindled"—they have seemed in the shadow of the entrance gates of

heaven. Some have found Mount Hermon amid the scenes of their daily walking or working. Some have had revelations of Christ amid the solitudes of forest, field, mountain, when they have purposely given the world the slip, and tried to steal a march upon its sure, swift tread ; or, at night we have gone forth with only the calm, passionless stars looking down, and there and then we have found a secret place where we have seen "Jesus only," and we have been all rapture, and exclaimed, "It is good to be here." Or, it has often been in the temple of God ; prayer has introduced us into a new world of feeling and thought, faith has made higher reaches of flight, praise has kindled our natures into angelic earnestness. We have felt it to be an oasis of spiritual refreshment. It has been "good to be there."

Such experiences and feelings often come *early* in our spiritual history, when the world hasn't cooled down our feeling from its white heat. From all such spots as Hermon, with its bright visions, how small the world grows—how faint its noises—how petty its interests—as we cling there by Christ's raiment, hold by Christ's hand. What a spot Mount Hermon ! The space around monarchs' thrones is commonplace and dull when compared to that.

We get such experiences *later on*, but they have not the edge and freshness of these earlier spiritual experiences. The one was the flower with the dew on it ; the other, the flower, only the sun's heat has dried up the dew. So it is, however, that wherever and whenever we get choice visions and experiences, they all centre in, and gather about, Christ. When we get near Him, all the pulses of our better nature get stirred and quickened, light dawns, joy wells up, and we say, "Master, it is good to be here."

II. Peter's exclamation is *the utterance of a very natural request, viz., for the permanence and continuance of such visions and experiences.*

"Let us make here three tabernacles," as if Peter had said, "Master, let us wait up here on Hermon alone with thee. Don't let us go down where the world disesteems thee, where our own hearts' feelings about thee cannot have room, and play, and chance of utterance, as here amid Hermon's silent solitudes. Master, let us make a resting-place of this Mount of Vision." His wish was very natural after all; and something akin to his feelings, have we not had, in moments of high spiritual rapture? "O that I had not to go back again to home, and life, and work, and the world, to hear the hum of its ceaseless toil, to meet the faces of men; to watch the grim sights that seem to rob earth of her witching beauty—poverty, pain, selfishness, wrong. Here alone with Christ I see it not. I hear not its wrangling noises. How good it is. Master, let us build."

We want spiritual visions and experiences to be fixed and permanent. We want them stamped indelibly upon our minds. Our chiefest sorrow is that our best feelings and highest experiences are so short-lived. They glance with meteor swiftness across our sky, leaving the dulness of our ordinary moments more striking by contrast. The world rushes too swiftly upon the heels of our heavenlier guests and visitants. We want to make such moments the rule, not like the brief and fitful sun-gleam of a winter's day, but like the bright continuous radiance of the summer, shining on and on. But we are not to "build" on Hermon.

This is our next thought—

III. *The refusal of Peter's request indicates the true place and duty of the Christian.*

We may "enjoy" such experiences, but not "*luxuriate*" in them. We may enjoy all the hope and inspiration such visions and experiences give, but voices in the home, voices in the city, voices in the great world, are calling us

here and there to stern duty. We get such hours with Christ, but they are brief as the soldier's furlough, spent with loved ones around the hearth at home, with love glances brightening, soon over; and then the stir of camp, the tread of the night-watch, and, perhaps, the rush and noise of battle. It is impossible to "build" on Hermon! We have each our post away down there at the foot of Hermon, on the bloodless battle-field of Duty, Sacrifice, and Service; and we must be there, waiting, watching! It is "good" to be there alone with Christ. It is "better" to be making Christ known—"better" to be influencing others by the power of a Christ-like character—"better" to wear the light and peace we found on Hermon out in the thick of the world, and let our holiest experiences act and re-act upon our commoner and more ordinary life, and help to transfigure all we do. In heaven such feelings and experiences will be "*permanent*"—"for ever with the Lord." Our best thoughts and feelings will "abide," or if they pass away, only as the young bud of spring passes into the full flower of July, and that into the mellow fruit of autumn.

How dull a life unchequered by such visions! The worldling has no Mount Hermon to enjoy; and yet the world promises bright and glowing visions to her votaries, but instead of the visions of Pisgah or Hermon, it is the dulness of the grim desert—the mocking mirage, and the taste of the brackish waters of Marah. The world leads us to no spot of which we can say, as the Christian whom Christ leads to Hermon's summit, "it is good to be here." Amen.

THEODORE HOOK.

Chelmsford.

I have given Mount Hermon as the scene of the Transfiguration, it being more generally accepted than Mount Tabor. See "Genius of the Gospel" for full elucidation of the whole scene, page 426, seventieth section.

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

OUR PURPOSE.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this *TEHILLIM*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough HOMILETIC treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

OUR METHOD.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections :—(1.) The HISTORY of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words, is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) ANNOTATIONS of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The ARGUMENT of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The HOMILETICS of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonizing methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

Subject : LIFE'S STORMS—(continued.)

“Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice :
 Have mercy also upon me, and answer me.
 When thou saidst, Seek ye my face :
 My heart said unto Thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.
 Hide not Thy face far from me ;
 Put not Thy servant away in anger :
 Thou hast been my help : leave me not,
 Neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.
 When my father and mother forsake me,
 Then the Lord will take me up.
 Teach me Thy way, O Lord,
 And lead me in a plain path,
 Because of mine enemies.
 Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies :
 For false witnesses are risen up against me,
 And such as breathe out cruelty.
 I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the
 Lord in the land of the living.
 Wait on the Lord : be of good courage,
 And He shall strengthen thine heart :
 Wait, I say, on the Lord.”—Ps. xxvii. 7-14.

HISTORY.—For the history of this Psalm, see HOMILIST, p. 17.

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver. 7.*—"Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice : have mercy also upon me, and answer me." "With my voice," that is, audibly aloud. The spirit of prayer becomes sometimes so strong as to break silence and take voice.

Ver. 8.—"When thou saidst, Seek ye my face ; my heart said unto me, Thy face, Lord, will I seek." In the margin, it is, "My heart said unto me, let my face seek Thy face." There is an obscurity in this expression, still the idea is obviously this—"Seek ye my face" is to be regarded as God's word to David, and David's response is, "Thy face, Jehovah, will I seek."

Ver. 9.—"Thou hast been my help : leave me not, neither," &c. "Thou hast been." The past tense is essential ; the idea is, what thou hast been, continue still to be.

Ver. 10.—"When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." For "take me up," the margin reads, "gather me." The case which David here puts is a suppositious one ; he does not say that his father or mother had ever forsaken him, or ever would ; he merely supposes their desertion. Should such an event occur, should his nearest friends desert him, he felt sure that Jehovah would take him up.

Ver. 11.—"Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies." "Plain path" in the margin reads "path of plainness," and "mine enemies," "those which observe me."

Ver. 12.—"Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies." The word "will" here means soul, and is used for the ruling wish.

Ver. 13.—"I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." Though the words, "I had fainted," are supplied by our translators, and are not in the original, they express the true sense of the passage. "Unless I believed, or fully expected to look upon Jehovah in the land of light." This, perhaps, is the literal translation, and the language is an instance of the figure called aposiopesis, in which the conclusion of the sentence is suppressed, either from excitement and hurried feeling, or because of some unwillingness to utter what is necessary to complete it. Thus, in this case, the apodosis would probably have been, "I would despair, or I must have perished."—Alexander.

Ver. 14.—"Wait on the Lord : be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart : wait, I say, on the Lord." This verse, and the preceding one, have been thus poetically rendered—

"Oh, if I had not believed verily to see the goodness of Jehovah
In the land of the living !

Wait on Jehovah, be strong, and let thine heart take courage,
Yea, wait on Jehovah !"

"Here," says Hengstenberg, "is the strong part of the soul speaking

to the weak. The Psalmist is not exhorting others, but exhorting himself: it is a kind of monologue."

ARGUMENT.—We have said that the Psalm consists of three parts—(1.) A triumphant declaration of faith in God; (2.) An earnest appeal in prayer to God; (3.) A self-exhortation to wait upon God.

HOMILETICS.—Homiletically the great subject of the Psalm may be regarded as *Life's Storms*: and it reveals—(1.) Courage in life's storms; (2.) Shelter in life's storms; (3.) Prayer in life's storms; (4.) Self-exhortation in life's storms. The first two subjects we have already treated: the last two we shall now indicate.

III. PRAYER in Life's Storms. Profitable reflections might be obtained from the following points discoverable in this prayer:—

First: This prayer is *earnestly vocal and appeals to mercy for relief*. "When I cry with my voice, have mercy." There are silent prayers, prayers that go forth from the soul in ejaculatory sighs, they take no voice, they are inarticulate, and sometimes inarticulatable; "they cannot be uttered." But this prayer went forth in the voice of earnest crying; the soul was roused into excitement, its emotions of fear were surging and strong, and it cried, and cried for what? "Mercy." It is "*mercy*" that the distressed soul wants. There are certain things that a responsible being requires in order to be held responsible, such as the means of knowing duty, the power of performing it, and freedom of action. It can claim these as a matter of justice, but *sinners* want mercy. Mercy to forgive, to rectify, to deliver, and to bless.

Secondly: This prayer *expresses ready compliance with the Divine request*. "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto Thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek." The "face" of God in the Bible sense means His favour; thus,—
"The Lord bless thee and keep thee, the Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." (1.) God requires us to seek His favour. The Bible is full of this:

“Seek ye the Lord while He may be found.” “Seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you.” Why does He require us to seek His redemptive favours? Why does He not bestow them, as He bestows the light of day, the riches of autumn, and all the blessings of nature irrespective of our requests? (a.) Not because our appeals can induce Him to be more merciful than He has ever been. Infinite goodness is unpersuadable. (b.) Not because the prayers of His creatures can in any way merit His favours. Why then? *Because earnest prayers qualify the suppliant rightly to receive, appreciate, and use the blessing sought.* Because God says to us, “Seek ye my face,” our hearts should respond promptly and fully, “Thy face, Lord, will I seek.”

Thirdly: This prayer *deprecates the disfavour of God as a terrible evil.* “Hide not Thy face from me: put not Thy servant away in anger.” To hide the face is expressive of displeasure. It is common for men when they receive an insult from another, when their sense of honour or justice is offended, to turn away their face from the offender with disgust and contempt. This is a severe punishment in some cases. It is a severe punishment to the son, when a tender and loving father turns the face away from him: to the wife, when a pure-hearted and noble-minded husband turns away his face from her. Hence David speaks of the hiding of God’s face as the most terrible of evils. God’s face—His favour is the sun of the soul. Were the sun to continue to hide his face from the earth, our planet would soon lose all its life and all its beauty. It is in the presence of God only is pleasure to be obtained. “In Thy presence there is fulness of joy, at Thy right hand,” &c.

Fourthly: This prayer *recognises the transcendent character of Divine friendship.* “When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.” The love of father and mother is the strongest, purest, faithfullest, the most self-sacrificing love we have on this earth. Earth has no brighter reflection of the Divine heart. But this may fail, it has often failed; instances occur when parents desert their children, when parental love turns into friendly hate.

Though this may occur with human parents it can never be so with the Infinite Father; our best friends may forsake us, but He never. Sometimes if some of our friends desert us, the remainder are disposed to do so. Either from a suspicion that there is something wrong in us, or from a dislike to adhere to one who is losing his popularity, they, too, forsake. Not so with the Great Friend; though all forsake, He remains faithful, He is influenced by no example. "Can a mother forget her sucking child, and have no compassion on the son of her womb?" &c.

Fifthly: This prayer *indicates the true method of safety*. What is the true method of safety? It is suggested in the 11th and 12th verses. (1.) Obedience to the Divine law. "Teach me thy will, O Lord, lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies." (a.) There is a "way" in which God would have us walk. That way is His law concerning us. (b.) That "way" God Himself must reveal to us. God alone can reveal His own will to the soul. (c.) To walk in that "way" is the true security. The path of duty is the path of safety. (2.) Interposition for Divine help. "Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies."

The next great division of this Psalm is—

IV. SELF-EXHORTATION in Life's Storms. "I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living," &c. I agree with Hengstenberg in regarding these words as addressed by David to himself: it is a self-exhortation—an encouraging soliloquy. Man can commune with himself; man ought to commune with himself. The Psalmist admonishes himself to be strong, that is, morally strong; strong to bear up magnanimously under trial, strong to pursue the path of duty with an invincible march. Such strength he seems to refer to two sources:—

First: *Faith in Divine goodness*. "I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." (1.) There is Divine goodness "in the land of the living." "Goodness and mercy are over all the works of His hand." The world floats on the sea and basks under the sky

of goodness. (2.) Men do not always see this goodness. So blinded often are the souls of men, that instead of seeing goodness they see nothing but evil; all is wrong, all is organized on the principle of malevolence. (3.) The blindness to this goodness is moral weakness. The man who sees no Divine goodness in the world must be weak; he is inspired by no lofty motive, animated by no soul-bracing hope. The vision of Divine goodness is the only moral tonic for the soul. David says, "I had fainted" unless I had *seen* it; and men are fainting everywhere for the want of seeing it. Such strength he refers to.

Secondly: *A consecration to the Divine service.* "Wait on the Lord." To wait upon the Lord is to serve Him, serve Him lovingly, thoroughly, faithfully, practically, and such service is moral strength. They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount as on eagles' wings, shall run and not be weary, walk and not faint.



HEATHEN PRAYER.—Pericles, the great Athenian statesman, never began to address an audience without first praying to the gods. Cornelius Scipio, the great Roman general, when once he had assumed the toga, never undertook any affair of importance without having passed some time alone in the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. "The best and noblest action," says Plato, "which a virtuous man can perform, and that which will most promote his success in life, is to live, by vows and prayers, in continual intercourse with the gods: nay, all who would act with due consideration ought, before beginning any undertaking, whether great or small, to invoke God."

WATCHING UNTO PRAYER.—When an archer shoots his arrow at a mark, he likes to go and see whether he has hit it. When you have written and sent off a letter to a friend, you expect some day that the postman will be knocking at the door with an answer. When a child asks his father for something, he looks in his face, even before he speaks, to see if he is pleased, and reads acceptance in his eyes. But it is to be greatly feared that many people feel, when their prayers are over, as if they had quite done with them; their only concern was to get them said. An old heathen poet speaks of Jupiter throwing certain prayers to the winds, dispersing them "in empty air." It is sad to think that we so often do that for ourselves. What would you think of a man who had written, and folded, and sealed, and addressed a letter, flinging it out into the street, and thinking no more about it? Sailors in foundering ships sometimes commit notes in sealed bottles to the waves, for the chance of their being some day washed on some shore. Sir John Franklin's companions among the snows, and Captain Allen Gardiner, dying of hunger in his cave, wrote words they could not be sure anyone would ever read. But we do not need to think of our prayers as random messages. We should, therefore, look for a reply to them, and watch to get it.—*Dr. Edmond.*

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Job.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of great scholarly and critical worth; such as Drs. Barnes, Wemyss, Mason, Goode, Noyes Lee, and Herman Hedwick Bernard: the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering: but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in an order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.

Subject: SATAN, AS A SERVANT OF THE INFINITE, MALEVOLENTLY DEALING WITH JOB'S CIRCUMSTANCES.

“And there was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house. And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them: and the Sabeans fell upon them and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house. And behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee. Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, and said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.”—Job i. 13-22.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS. Ver. 13.—“*And there was a day.*”—“And it came to pass as it might be to-day.” This was probably the regular day for their domestic banquet. It was a convivial family party.

Ver. 14.—“*The oxen were plowing and the asses feeding.*”—“*And the she asses were feeding.*” Female asses were then and there much more valuable than male ones on account of their milk. On the journey they carried support for the traveller, as well as the traveller himself and his baggage.

Ver. 15.—“*And the Sabeans fell upon them and took them away.*”—“When a host of Sabeans fell upon them and took them”—Dr. Bernard. So also Dr. Lee. The idea is that these wandering plunderers rushed violently on them. These Sabeans were evidently a predatory tribe prowling through the districts of Arabia for purposes of outrages and plunder.

Ver. 15.—“*Yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword.*” Not only were the oxen and the asses taken, but the servants who were at work with them in the field they slaughtered with the sword.

Ver. 15.—“*And I only am escaped alone to tell thee.*” “I,” who was the messenger? The word translated messenger here is usually translated angel, but its meaning here is one who is sent. Who was the bearer of the terrible errand? Was he in Job’s employ, or was he a stranger who had happened to witness the outrage?

Ver. 16.—“*While he was yet speaking there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.*” “The fire of God” here refers in all probability to lightning. In the margin it is called “a great fire.” A terrible electric flash came and burnt up the sheep and the servants.

Ver. 17.—“*While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.*” “The Chaldeans were a fierce and warlike people; and when they were subdued by the Assyrians, a portion of them appear to have been placed in Babylon to ward off the incursions of the neighbouring Arabians. In time they gained the ascendancy over their Assyrian masters, and grew into the mighty empire of Chaldea and Babylonia.” A very striking description of these Chaldeans we have in Habakkuk i. 6-11. This messenger who followed so swiftly in the steps of the first declares that he only escaped alone to tell him.

Ver. 18.—“*Whilst he was yet speaking there came also another, and said,*” &c. What sad tidings did this third messenger bring? He says, “*Behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.*” Though the word here rendered “young men” is the same as that rendered “servants” in verse 17, it is generally believed that here it represents Job’s sons and

daughters, the young people. The great wind from the wilderness was one of those tornadoes more common in oriental countries than others more distant from the equator. This fearful hurricane from the wilderness came in all its force upon the house where Job's sons and daughters were enjoying their convivial banquet.

Jer. 20.—"Then Job arose, and rent his mantle." "Job arose" not necessarily from sitting, but from the wonted calmness of his soul he was mentally roused. He seems to have heard with calmness the other messages, but when tidings of the destruction of his children met him, he was moved to the depths of his nature. The rending of the mantle was the conventional mark of deep grief (*Gen. xxvii. 34*). Orientals wore a flowing mantle over their shirt, and loose pantaloons. "*Shaved his head.*" This also was an old symbol of grief (*Jeremiah xli. 5, Micah i. 16*). "*Mother's womb.*" By this he poetically means the earth. The earth is the universal mother of mankind. Out of it, as to our bodies, we came; into it we return, as destitute as when we first appeared.

Jer. 21.—"The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Job here realizes God's assertion (verse 8) against Satan's (verse 11). Instead of cursing, he blesses the Lord Jehovah, that is, Jehovah Himself.

Jer. 22.—"In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly." "In all this," that is, in all his expressions and feelings on this occasion Job did no wrong, nor did he attribute folly to his Maker; that is, he vented no murmuring remark against God.

HOMILETICS.—The great subject here is a continuation of the former homiletic sketch, namely—the FOE OF FOES. In the former passage he appeared before us as a being who had a personal existence, who intruded into the holy, who was amenable to his Maker, a vagrant in the universe, and a servant of the Infinite. It is in the latter aspect that he still appears before us in these words. He has received from the Almighty permission to deal with Job; and here we have him malevolently dealing with the patriarch's *circumstances*. In the next paragraph we shall have to study him as malevolently dealing with Job's *personality*. In dealing with Job's circumstances as here recorded, we are struck with four things concerning him—the enthusiasm of his malignity, the variety of his agents, the celerity of his movements, and the folly of his calculations.

I. THE ENTHUSIASM OF HIS MALIGNITY. No sooner does he

receive permission than he begins in terrible earnestness. He does not seem to have lost a moment. Like a hungry vulture in a carrion atmosphere, he pounces down upon his victim. Now he strikes at the cattle that were ploughing the field, and the she asses that were beside them. Then he slays the servants, then with a shaft of fire from heaven he burns up the "sheep and servants," and then he breathes a hurricane through the wilderness, and levels to the dust the house in which his children are revelling in the festive pleasures of family love, and destroys them all. Thus he goes to the utmost point of the liberty which his great Master granted him. He could do no more with Job's circumstances. He deprived him as in a moment of all his property and his children. In one short hour, it would seem, he reduced this, the greatest of all the men in the East, to a pauper; and, perhaps, one of the happiest of fathers to the desolation of childlessness. He had no authority to go beyond this point at present. He had to wait for another Divine communication before he could touch the body of Job. He did his utmost, and did it with an infernal delight.

II. THE VARIETY OF HIS AGENTS. He employed—

First: *Wicked men*. He breathed his malign spirit into the men of Sheba, and they rushed to the work of violence and destruction. He inflamed the Chaldeans with the same murderous passions, and then "three bands fell upon the camels," carried them away, and slew the servants, &c. Alas! this arch-fiend has access to human souls. "He worketh in the children of disobedience." He leadeth them captive at his will.

He employed—

Secondly: *Material nature*. The great God gave him power over the elements of nature. He kindled the lightning, and made it consume the sheep and the servants. He raised the atmosphere into a tempest, levelled its fury against the house and brought it down to the destruction of all within. With heaven's permission this mighty spirit of evil can cause earthquakes to engulph cities, breathe pestilences to depopulate

countries, create storms that will spread devastation over sea and land. "He is the prince of the power of the air."

III. THE CELERITY OF HIS MOVEMENTS. How rapidly his fell strokes followed each other. Before the first messenger of evil had told the patriarch his terrible tale, another appeared. Whilst the first was "yet speaking," another came; and whilst the second was yet speaking came the third. The carriers of misery trod on the heels of each other. Why this hurry? Was it because this work of violence was agreeable to the passions of this foul fiend? Or was it because the rapidity would be likely so to shock Job's moral nature as to produce a religious revulsion, and cause him to do what he desired him to do—curse the Almighty to his face? Perhaps both. Perhaps the celerity was both his pleasure and his policy. Trials seldom come alone. The first is generally the har-binger of the second, and so on. It is true what our great dramatist has said :

"When sorrows come
They come not single spies,
But in battalions."

IV. THE FOLLY OF HIS CALCULATIONS. What was the result of all this on Job? The very reverse of what Satan had calculated. He had told the Almighty that such visitations would rouse Job to curse Him to His face. Instead of which Job falls down and blesses his Maker:—"Then Job arose and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, and said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." He "*worshipped*." He did not curse. In his worship we discover three things:—

First: *His profound sensibility*. "He rent his mantle and shaved his head." He was no Stoic. He deeply felt his trial. He fell prostrate under its heavy load, and "down upon the ground," with the load on him he worshipped. His heart bled at every pore. Great was his grief. There would be no virtue in his not feeling. He would have been less than a man not to have done so. Genuine religion, instead of

deadening the human sensibilities, gives them depth and refinement. Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus.

In his worship we discover—

Secondly: *His exalted philosophy*. He traced all to the Great First Cause, *God*. All that he had lost God had given him. When he came from the womb of the great mother of all—the earth—and when he returned back into his chambers of everlasting forgetfulness, he would have nothing.

All that he had possessed came to him as a gift from Jehovah. He did not trace it to luck, or to fortune, or even to his own industry. “The Lord gave,” he says. “The Lord gave me my sheep and oxen; the Lord gave me my children. These are all his gifts.” And what he had lost the Lord had also taken away. He does not trace his loss to chance, necessity, misfortune; nor does he trace it to the plundering Sabeans or ruthless Canaanites; nor to the lightnings or the winds; nor even to the great arch-enemy of humanity; but up *directly* to Jehovah. He knew that the forces of nature, the passions of wicked men, and the plots and workings of infernal spirits were all under the master control of Jehovah. This was his *philosophy*; and is it not true? The philosophy that traces the events of our history up to some secondary causes, or the laws of nature, is but a philosophy “falsely so called.” All is under the Absolute One. He originates all good, He controls all evil.

“All good proceedeth from Thee,
As sunbeams from the sun,
All evils fall before Thee,
Thy will through all is done.”

In his worship we discover—

Thirdly: *His religious magnanimity*. “Blessed be the name of the Lord.” Wicked men would have vented their rage in curses on the Sabeans and Chaldeans, on the lightning and on the wind; or would have risen up in rebellious hostility against heaven. This is what Satan expected. But instead of this, Job says, “Blessed be the name of the Lord. I praise Him, I adore Him in all.” This is something more than submission to the Divine will under suffering; something even

more than acquiescence in the Divine will in suffering. It is exultation in the manifestation of the Divine will in all the events of life. It amounts to the experience of St. Paul, who said, "I glory in tribulation," &c.

How disappointed this arch-fiend must have been with the result. The result was the very opposite to what he had expected—to what he had wrought for. Thus it has ever been, and thus it will ever be. God may permit Satan to blast our worldly prospects, to wreck our fortunes, and destroy our friendships. But if we trust in Him He will not allow him to touch our souls to their injury. He only uses the fiend to try His servants. An old Welsh minister, in preaching on this text, is reported to have said that God permitted Satan to try Job as the tradesman tries the coin that his customer has tendered in payment for the purchased wares. He strikes it on the counter and hears it ring as rings the true metal, before he accepts it, and places it in his drawer. The great Merchant Man employed Satan to ring Job on the counter of trial. He did so—did so with all the force of his mighty arm, and in the Divine ear the moral heart of the patriarch vibrated as the music of Divine metal, fit for the treasury in the heavens.



CHARACTERISTICS OF SATAN.

“He above the rest,
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tower: his form had not yet lost
All its original brightness, nor appear'd
Less than archangel ruin'd, and th' excess
Of glory obscured: as when the sun, new risen,
Looks through the horizontal misty air,
Shorn of his beams: or from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs: darkened so, yet shone
Above them all th' archangel: but his face
Deep scars of thunder had entrench'd, and care
Sat on his faded cheeks, but under brows
Of dauntless courage, and consid'rate pride,
Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast
Signs of remorse and passion, to behold
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather,
(Far other once beheld in bliss!) condemn'd
For ever now to have their lot in pain.”—*Milton*.

Sermonic Glances at the Gospel of St. John.

As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form, of Sermonic outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dorner; &c., &c.

Subject: CHRIST AND THE CREATION.

"All things were made by Him: and without Him was not anything made that was made."—John i. 2.

THE old Gnostic Christians held that the world was not created by the Great God, "but by Demiurgus, a spirit descending from the Æons, which were themselves derived from the Deity." John's statement stands in direct antagonism to this. He says, "All things were made by Him"—the Infinite Logos—"all things." Some of the ancients said that part of the universe was made by a good, and part by an evil principle. John's language stands opposed to this also. The work of creation is not a partnership work, it is the product of One Being. "All things," organic and inorganic, animate and inanimate, material and spiritual, rational and irrational. "And without Him was not anything made that was made." This covers all; whatever has been, whatever is, in the universe, sin excepted, He created. The universe had a *beginning*; it is not eternal, and it originated, not in *chance*, not in a *joint authorship*, but in the fiat of One Supreme Intelligence. Creation is ascribed to Christ in many other passages of Evangelic Writ: see Col. i. 16; Heb. i. 10, 12; Rev. iv. 11.

From this we infer:—

I. That Christ is OLDER than the universe. The worker must be older than his productions. How old then is the universe? Who shall go back enumerating ages until he

reaches the initial hour of creation? If there be any truth in geology, this little globe was in existence before man appeared as its lordly inhabitant. But its Author is older than that; He was before all time, He was in "the bosom of the Father," in the solitudes of immensity alone—alone with the Infinite.

"The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way,
Before His works of old.
I was set up from everlasting,
From the beginning, or ever the earth was.
When there were no depths, I was brought forth;
When there were no fountains abounding with water," &c., &c., &c.

"The drops that swell the ocean,
The sands that girt the shore,
To measure Thy duration;
Their numbers have no power."

II. That Christ is GREATER than the universe. As the architect is greater than his building, the author than his work, the artist than his productions, Christ is greater than the universe. (1.) Greater in extent. How great is the universe in extent? Astronomers tell us that our solar system, as compared with the centres of systems that come within the view of their telescopes on a bright starry night, is as only one solitary leaf in a mighty forest. But what the strongest telescope discovers may be insignificant in proportion to that beyond the reach of vision. But Christ's being extends beyond the limits of the universe. It is in Him as atoms in a boundless sea of sunbeams. (2.) Greater in force. What mighty forces there are in the universe, chemical, muscular, mental; but Christ's force is greater than all,—it was the breath and energy of all. (3.) Greater in beauty. How lovely is the universe; every part is crowded with beauty; it blooms in the plant, it sparkles in the mineral, the heavens and the earth are full of beauty: but all the beauty in the universe is but the effluence of His æsthetic nature, a touch of His pencil.

III. That Christ is OWNER of the universe. Production gives the highest right to possession. The produce of our

energy we claim as our own, but what are our productions? Not creations, but combinations. The highest creature in the universe, possessing the largest amount of inventive genius and executive force, can only bring existing elements into new forms. Creatorship gives an absolute and indefeasible right to a production. Christ, therefore, *owns* the universe. "The sea is, He made it, and His hands formed the dry land." On the same principle the universe is His, for He made it.

CONCLUSION :

"Praise ye the Lord.
 Praise ye the Lord from the heavens:
 Praise Him in the heights.
 Praise ye Him, all His angels:
 Praise ye Him, all His hosts.
 Praise ye Him, sun and moon:
 Praise Him, all ye stars of light.
 Praise Him, ye heaven of heavens,
 And ye waters that be above the heavens.
 Let them praise the name of the Lord :
 For He commanded, and they were created.
 He hath also established them for ever and ever :
 He hath made a decree which shall not pass."



Germ of Thought.



THE VISIONS OF PAUL.

Subject: SECOND VISION OF PAUL.

"And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance; and saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me. And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee: and when the blood of thy martyr, Stephen, was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his

death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him. And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles."—Acts xxii. 17-21.

PAUL here makes a declaration to the Jews, how he was converted from Judaism to Christianity, and why he devoted his life to the conversion of the Gentiles, viz.:—that Christ appeared to him in a vision, saying:—"Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem." Notice:—

I. THE PLACE. "In the temple." Respecting the temple, I need not say much, yet it is proper to observe, that it had been for a long time the place of communication between God and the minds of men. The Theocracy having now ceased, and the Christocracy being substituted for it, it was proper that Christ, the Author and Head of the new religion, should make His appearance here to Paul in this vision.

This shows the Catholicity of the new Convert. Paul went to the temple; he was not a bigot, running from one extreme to the other. He did not go up to Jerusalem and say, There is the old temple; with that I have nothing to do; I will not go there. He did not act so. He regarded it as a sacred place, for it had been God's house; the materials were God's, a part of His property, and in his estimation, not more unholy than any other part of the world. He went there not to unite in public worship, not to give his sanction to lifeless ceremonies performed by godless men; but he went to the temple as the palace of the national God, and every Jew as a Jew, had a right to go there to do what he thought proper. Paul went and had a vision. Notice:—

II. THE SEASON. "While he was praying." Respecting prayer, it may be proper to make one observation. There seems to be a natural, invisible, indissoluble connexion between the offering of prayer by man to God, and the receiving spiritual blessings from God; this is a great truth, but we are tempted mentally to neglect, and practically to abuse it. The Bible teaches this in two ways:—

1. *By doctrines.* Christ said, "Ask and you shall receive,

seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." That means an incessant knocking, an unceasing application of all the desires and wishes of the soul to the Deity as their everlasting and glorious centre. O may God teach this truth more fully to us, that without praying to Him we cannot expect any extraordinary spiritual gift.

2. *By practice.* The baptism of Christ, the Pentecost, the conversion of Cornelius, &c., are convincing proofs of the power of prayer. Notice:—

III. THE FORM. "He was in a trance." Respecting a trance I will only say, that it seems to be a fact, that it is possible for the soul of man (I mean the rational soul of man)—the whole internal being of man, to come in contact with realities, not with figures; not with phantoms, but with spiritual realities, while the senses are in a state of suspension, *i.e.*, the mind of man may be brought into contact with the spiritual world without the mediation of the senses at all. I am astonished at the little attention this truth has received from those who believe in a supernatural religion. Our religion is supernatural; its evidences, its promises, its rewards, its God, are all spiritual, and yet there is such a dreadful materiality gathering around the heart of the Church. We must not apply the laws of matter to the spiritual universe.

There are two ways by which we may become acquainted with the world of spirits:—

1. *By consciousness.* We cannot see the outward with this eye; there are no voices without for this ear.

2. *By testimony.* The express testimony of the Word of God is the only medium by which we can possibly have any communication as to the existence and character of the spiritual world. But the great God, who wishes to have spiritual thinkers and spiritual worship, has scattered over the page of inspiration these visions, that we might study them as facts, and exercise the little knowledge we have respecting our own souls and the eternal world. Notice:—

IV. THE SUBJECT. Now we come to what is of very great

importance as a piece of sacred history, viz.:—the communication of Christ to Paul. I command thy ways. Go out of the city, because the people will not receive thee nor thy testimony here, and thou hast a great work to do elsewhere. This suggests to us :—

1. *Here Christ claims authority over the ministry.* “I send thee.” He has authority, and He has not only supreme and singular, but sole authority. I tell thee go, and thou must go.

2. *His spiritual providence over His own agencies and His own ministers.* I suppose all the facts of the New Testament were suggestive—were symbols of principles now in operation. Christ said to His Apostles, Go. He does it now, not in the same sensible manner: now we must judge by a series of events, by a variety of circumstances. When Christ says, Go, it is right to go; and when He says, It is not right to go, it is right to stay; and may all the servants of God know what His will is, and be disposed to practise what they know.

CALEB MORRIS.

(*To be continued.*)



Subject: THE PROPHET AND THE LION.

“And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, to wit, for the prophet whom he had brought back. And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his carcase was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it; the lion also stood by the carcase.”—1 Kings xiii. 23, 24.

IN order to understand the tragical event recorded in the text, it is necessary to make a general survey of the kingdom at the time. Solomon, the wisest of men—yea, and the foolishlest of men in some things—had just slept with his fathers, and Rehoboam, his son, took the reins of government in his stead. The glory of the kingdom of Israel reached its culminating point under the long and prosperous reign of Solomon. He traded with distant countries, even with Ophir; he reigned over all the kings from the river even to the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt.

However, as rain and storms follow hard on the heels of fair weather, so it was in the Jewish kingdom; the political sky was overcast; the thunder of revolt followed; ten tribes seceded to form an independent kingdom under Jeroboam, and two only out of the twelve preserved their loyalty to the house of David.

The country groaned under the heavy burden of taxation laid upon it by Solomon, and when Rehoboam came to the throne the people petitioned him for the reduction of the taxes; but instead of redressing their grievances, he answered ironically, "My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins." This is not the last time the insolency and tyranny of kings inflamed the minds of their subjects to revolt; the same drama has been acted over and over again in modern times. The tyranny of Charles the First in Britain fanned the sparks of discontent into flames of civil war, and at last it brought him to the scaffold. The French Revolution also sprung from the same cause, and deluged Europe with tears and blood.

"We love

The king who loves the law, respects his bounds,
And reigns content within them; him we serve
Freely and with delight, who leaves us free.
But recollecting still that he is man,
We trust him not too far."

Towards the close of Solomon's reign a clever and ambitious young statesman arose, whose name was Jeroboam. He won the affections of the ten tribes, and studied the best way to establish his throne upon a firm foundation. Being well skilled in the intricacies of statecraft, he founded two altars, one in Bethel and the other in Dan, and placed a golden calf in each, in imitation of Apis and Mnevis, at Heliopolis, in Egypt; and this pagan policy won for him an unenviable title—"Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin."

I. THE SUCCESS OF THE PROPHET. The multitude rejoiced at the prospect of a liberal government; and in order to gain popularity, Jeroboam delivered an oration whereby he hoodwinked the assembly—"It is too much for you to go up to

Jerusalem ; behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." See how the demagogue pandered to the popular taste ; he knew well that the rabble would choose the wide gate and broad way, in preference to the strait gate and narrow path which leadeth unto life. It is characteristic of false religions that their fundamentals are fashioned according to the depraved tastes of man, but Christianity is the reverse of that—"If any man come after me, let him deny himself, and take up the cross, and follow me."

Moreover, his political hypocrisy won their applause ; and while their hurrah ascended, mixed with clouds of incense from the profane altar, here comes the man of God.

1. *He appeared unexpectedly.* History is silent regarding his birth, education, and family ; it gives not so much as his name. Simply—"The man of God, who came from Judah." Travellers tell us that the river Jordan, after springing out of the mountains of Anti-Lebanon, runs underground, through a natural tunnel for miles, and then rushes forth suddenly, a strong, transparent current, and meanders towards the Dead Sea. Even so the childhood and youth of this prophet run through the dark tunnel of historical silence, unseen by mortal eye ; but at Bethel he rushes forth into public life, and it is easier to imagine than describe his sudden appearance upon the king and the populace. It was a moral ambushade.

Jeroboam attempted to rob the Holy One of Israel of His glory by saying of the golden calf, "Behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt." Meanwhile God thought it was full time for Him to defend Himself, and sent witnesses to prove the reverse. Let us call them one by one. Broken altar, what sayest thou ? My disjointed body says No. Scattered ashes, what say you ? No. Withered arm, what is thy testimony ? No, emphatically no. They unanimously proved the falseness of his assertion, and Jeroboam was convinced, but did not forsake his evil ways.

In reading the annals of the stage we are told that the following event happened in a theatre. One of the players acting his part exclaimed :

"O God, there is another and a better world."

Then he instantly fell on the boards, and the spectators, at first thinking it was an artificial fall, began to applaud it as a grand oratorical stroke, but they were soon convinced by the distorted countenance and quivering limbs, that he was actually wrestling with the King of Terrors; they were confused—instead of laughter and applause, heart-rending sighs and groans were heard—it was no play, but the reality of death stared them in the face; moreover, the multitude dispersed with heavy hearts and gloomy countenances. So, also, Jeroboam was a political player, acting comedy to amuse the crowd at Bethel. Nevertheless, when the man of God appeared, he was struck dumb before the assembly; the pliant muscles of his arm stiffened, the warm blood freezed in his veins, the joints became obstinate and refused to obey his will; the golden calf fell, its symmetrical proportions were marred, and its dignity humiliated before the crowd; the spectators reluctantly left the place sadly disappointed, and returned every one to his tent.

2. *His stern honesty.* When he arrived at the scene of action he did not shrink from his duties, but proclaimed his message as a man who felt the awfulness of his position. “And he cried against the altar in the name of the Lord, and said: O, altar, altar, thus saith the Lord: Behold a child shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee.” It required no little energy of mind to stand thus single-handed in opposition to the king, and steer his vessel against the wind and tide of public opinion; but he knew that his barque could not be shipwrecked, as there was an omnipotent hand at the helm. Undoubtedly the same unflinching honesty is required of every ambassador of Christ. “But if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted?” It is to be feared that certain classes of society but seldom have the truth presented to them in a homely garb. The sword of truth is decorated with the flowers of flattery. The tongue that ought to say, Woe! is covered with velvet, and proclaims “peace where there is no peace.” The hands that should tear to tatters the silk mantles of self-righteousness

and refuges of lies, are covered with the kid gloves of polish. To be a *nice* little man, and win the applause of men, is more congenial to the refined taste of the respectable flunkey, than to turn the world upside down with Paul. "Awake, awake : put on thy strength, O Zion ; put on thy beautiful garments ; loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion." Let thy leaders be honest, thy officers of good report, and thy members the children of their Father who is in heaven.

3. *His forgiving temper.* "Then Jeroboam put forth his hand, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand, which he put forth against him dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him."

O, but man, proud man,
Drest in little brief authority ;
——— Like an angry ape
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven,
As make the angels weep."

Nevertheless the man of God prayed for the apostate king that his hand should be restored. "The king said, Entreat now the face of the Lord thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me again." Why not pray to the golden calves, Jeroboam? Ah! the force of right is still stronger than the force of policy. The arrogancy of kingcraft cowed down in the face of retributive justice. "And the man of God besought the Lord, and the king's hand was restored him again and became as it was before." We all know how natural it is for poor humanity to pay evil for evil, and in this case the best of us almost expect the man of God to avenge his insults, nay, his moral greatness elevated him above the animal passions that seek revenge. What a difficult task it is to pray for an enemy! We can slander an enemy, we can burn his property, we can fight duels, everything except pray for him. A man of unforgiving temper is like the demoniac of old possessed by the evil spirits of envy, malice, and revenge ; they strip off the drapery of decency, and drive him morally naked to dwell among the imaginary tombs of conquered enemies, in the howling wilderness of isolation. Moreover, the feelings that arise from

a forgiving disposition are the most exquisite of all enjoyments.

“More bright than madness and the dreams of wine.”

Heaven smiles, hell flees, and conscience says, Well done, well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord.

II. THE TRANSGRESSION OF THE PROPHET. Under the changing western sky, we have often seen the sun shining brilliantly in the morning, and at noon its smiling face was veiled by dark clouds. So the morning of this man's life was successful and promising, but soon his meridian splendour was tarnished by the cloud of disobedience. The best of men have their faults. Had their lives been faultless—a straight line without a curve—and their actions a plantation of fancy trees, without a crooked thorn, they would appear greater than men. (James v. 17.)

1. *Indecision of Character.* For so was it charged him by the word of the Lord—“Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn away again by the same way that thou camest.” But notwithstanding the commandment, the apostate prophet from Bethel overtook him by the way, resting under the shade of an oak tree, and with much fair speech he persuaded him to return to eat bread and drink water; he yielded, and was severely punished for his fickleness. Indecision is a great blemish in a man's character, and an impediment in his way to perform any heroic deed. “A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.” Look at the fickle-minded young man; he is always roving, like the Wandering Jew, in quest of a Paradise, and at last returns, like the prodigal, naked and hungry. Again, see the religious chamelion; he goes around all the denominations, but after partaking of the various religious tables, he resembles the lean kine of Pharaoh after swallowing the seven fat kine; lean they were in the beginning, and they continued so unto the end.

2. *That temptation is stronger when it cometh in the disguise of friendship.* The man of God indignantly refused the invitation of the king, an open enemy, and told him in plain terms

—"If thou wilt give me half thine house I will not come with thee." But this backsliding old prophet enticed him by false pretensions. Likely this impostor once belonged to the school of the prophets, possibly prophetic messages ran along the wire of his existence; he continued to assume the prophetic garb, but was never favoured with the burden of the Lord to Israel! His false tongue pronounced the prophetic vocabulary without the prophetic inspiration; he was like a musical instrument that once inspired the soul with Divine harmony, but now out of tune; he felt himself deserted by the Spirit of God, and still, to keep up appearances, he wished to have some intercourse with godly men. Are we not troubled by these false prophets in modern times? Shun them as you would a poisonous malaria, or an infectious fever! "Beware of false prophets," &c. (Matt. vii. 15-20.)

III. THE JUDICIAL DEATH OF THE PROPHET. "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

1. *That Disobedience is a great Sin.* Nothing awakens the resentment of a father more than the disobedience of his offspring. Victoria will soon visit her refractory subjects with imprisonment, penal servitude, or the gallows. Our heavenly Father, the Supreme Ruler of all, is a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the father upon the children, &c. "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of lambs." (1 Sam. xv. 22.)

2. *Once a man steps out of the path of duty he is out of the path of safety.* We hear people often complain of providence, whereas their misfortunes arise from their own folly. All the trouble which comes from God to meet us, He gives strength according to the days to bear them; but the troubles that arise from our own wilfulness, we must carry or drag them ourselves. Had Jonah gone to Nineveh, there would be no obstruction in his way; he disregarded the mandates of heaven, and had to face the storms, billows, and the whale. "Surely the way of transgressors is hard." If the prophet followed the Divine instructions, all the lions of Asia could do him no harm; but he forfeited the safe-conduct of heaven,

and was drawn to the jaws of death by the honeyed accents of an old hypocrite. Our enemies are still numerous and subtle.

3. *God showed mercy in judgment.* Though the lion was permitted to kill him, he was not allowed to feast upon him. Cruel animal—"Hitherto shalt thou come and no further." The tender-hearted mother, whose sailor boy was shipwrecked, and buried under the ocean wave, is often heard saying how much more resigned she would be—how it would assuage her grief—if she had to watch his last moments on a bed of sickness, and follow his mortal remains to his quiet resting-place; but this fond wish is denied her, the body is irrecoverably lost. And the prophet took up the carcase of the man of God to mourn, and to bury him, saying—Alas, my brother! Nations and families profess to weep after those whom they ill-treated in their life-time. "Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them." (Luke xi. 47.)

4. *That God's method is to punish His children on earth rather than punish them for ever in hell.* The prophet had transgressed, and every transgression must be punished, so God allowed the king of the forest to execute his judgment, rather than the devil, the roaring lion, should prey upon his soul for ever. The gardener takes the pruning knife to cut the offshoots that too luxuriantly grow upon the fruit-tree, knowing that they take too much of the sap, and thereby mar the size, beauty, and flavour of the fruit. God likewise prunes the wild offshoots of the Christian character in various ways. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment," &c. (2 Cor. iv. 17, 18.) But why should the ungodly escape punishment? "Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them." See the commercial traveller at the hotel; he sits in the best parlour, sleeps in the best bedroom, the table is spread before him with dainties, and great attention is paid to his wishes, whilst the children of the house must help themselves with a rougher fare in the kitchen. What an unnatural mother to forget her own offspring and attend to the stranger. Ah, he must pay his bill, but the

children are free, and the mother will caress them when the stranger is far away. The ungodly also must pay a bill of retribution upon his quitting the scenes of mortal life for the manifold gifts he thanklessly received from the hand of Providence, but all the children that came out of great tribulation shall be free—free from punishment, afflictions, tears and trials, and underneath them are the everlasting arms “And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the suffering of the present time is not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

London.

W. ALONZO GRIFFITHS.

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The Pith of Renowned Sermons.

The sermons of some of the greatest preachers of England are lost to modern men through their verbosities; it is the intention, under this section, to give from time to time their pith and spirit.

No. XV.—ARCHBISHOP FÉNÉLON.

Subject: THE SAINTS' CONVERSE WITH GOD.

“Pray without ceasing.”—1 Thess. v. 17.

I WISH to demonstrate, in this discourse, first, the general necessity of prayer; secondly, its peculiar duty; thirdly, the manner in which we ought to pray.

I. GOD ALONE CAN INSTRUCT US IN OUR DUTY. The imperfections of our fellow-creatures cast a shade over the truths that we learn from them. Such is our weakness that we do not receive, with sufficient docility, the instructions of those who are as imperfect as ourselves. A thousand suspicions, jealousies, fears, and prejudices, prevent us from profiting as we might by what we hear from men; and though they announce the most serious truths, yet what they do weakens the effect of what they say. In a word, it is God alone who

can perfectly teach us. St. Bernard said, in writing to a pious friend: "If you are seeking less to satisfy a vain curiosity than to get true wisdom, you will sooner find it in deserts than in books. The silence of the rocks and the pathless forests will teach you better than the eloquence of the most gifted men." "All," says St. Augustine, "that we possess of truth and wisdom is a borrowed good, flowing from that Fountain for which we ought to thirst in the fearful desert of this world, that, being refreshed and invigorated by these dews from heaven, we may not faint upon the road that conducts us to a better country. Every attempt to satisfy the cravings of our hearts at other sources only increases the void. You will be always poor if you do not possess the only true riches." Do not think that it is necessary to pronounce many words. To pray is to say, let Thy will be done. It is to form a good purpose; to raise your heart to God; to lament your weakness; to sigh at the recollection of your frequent disobedience. This prayer demands neither method, nor science, nor reasoning; it is not essential to quit one's employment, it is a simple movement of the heart towards its Creator, and a desire that whatever you are doing you may do it to His glory. The best of all prayers is to act with a pure intention and with a continual reference to the will of God. It depends much upon ourselves whether our prayers be efficacious. It is not by a miracle, but by a movement of the heart, that we are benefited; by a submissive spirit. Let us believe, let us trust, let us hope, and God never will reject our prayer.

II. THE PECULIAR OBLIGATION OF PRAYER. Were I to give all the proofs that this subject affords, I should describe every condition of life, that I might point out its dangers, and the necessity of recourse to God in prayer. But I will simply state that under all circumstances we have need of prayer. There is no situation in which it is possible to be placed, where we have not many virtues to acquire, and many faults to correct. We find in our own temperament, or in our habits, or in the peculiar character of our minds, qualities that do not suit our occupations, and that oppose our duties. One person

is connected by marriage with another whose temper is so unequal that life becomes a perpetual warfare. Some, who are exposed to the contagious atmosphere of the world, find themselves so susceptible to the vanity which they inhale, that all their pure desires vanish. Others have solemnly promised to renounce their resentments, to conquer their aversions, to suffer with patience certain crosses, and to repress their eagerness for wealth; but nature prevails, and they are vindictive, violent, impatient, and avaricious. Even the exercise of charity is often a snare to us. It calls us to certain occupations that dissipate the mind, and that may degenerate into mere amusement. It is for this reason that St. Chrysostom says that nothing is so important as to keep an exact proportion between the interior source of virtue and the external practice of it; else, like the foolish virgins, we shall find that the oil in our lamp is exhausted when the bridegroom comes.

III. OF THE MANNER IN WHICH WE OUGHT TO PRAY. (1.) *We must pray with attention.* God listens to the voice of the heart, not to that of the lips. Our whole heart must be engaged in prayer. It must fasten upon what it prays for; and every human object must disappear from our minds. To whom should we speak with attention, if not to God? Can He demand less of us than that we should think of what we say to Him? Dare we hope that He will listen to us, and think of us, when we forget ourselves in the midst of our prayers? (2.) *We must also ask with faith;* a faith so firm that it never falters. He who prays without confidence cannot hope that his prayer will be granted. Will not God love the heart that trusts in Him? "When we pray to God," says St. Cyprian, "with entire assurance, it is Himself who has given us the spirit of our prayer." Then it is the Father listening to the words of His child; it is He who dwells in our hearts, teaching us to pray. (3.) *We must join humility with trust.* "Great God," said Daniel, "when we prostrate ourselves at Thy feet, we do not place our hopes for the success of our prayers upon our own righteousness, but upon Thy mercy." (4.) *We must pray with love.* "It is love," says St. Augustine,

“that asks, that seeks, that knocks, that finds, and that is faithful to what it finds.” We cease to pray to God as soon as we cease to love Him, as soon as we cease to thirst for His perfections. The coldness of our love is the silence of our hearts towards God. Without this we may pronounce prayers, but we do not pray; for what shall lead us to meditate upon the laws of God, if it be not the love of Him who has made those laws? (5.) *We must pray with perseverance.* The perfect heart is never weary of seeking God. This will obtain from Him what we should never merit by our own merit. It will make us pass happily from darkness to light; “for know,” says St. Augustine, “that God is near to us, even when He appears far from us.” (6.) *We should pray with a pure intention.* We should not mingle in our prayers what is false with what is real; what is perishable with what is eternal; low and temporal interests with that which concerns our salvation. Do not seek to render God the protector of your self-love and ambition, but the promoter of your good desires. You ask for the gratification of your passions, or to be delivered from the cross, of which He knows you have need. Carry not to the foot of the altar irregular desires and indiscreet prayers; sigh not there for vain and fleeting pleasures. Open your heart to your Father in heaven, that His spirit may enable you to ask for the true riches. “How can He grant you,” says St. Augustine, “what you do not yourself desire to receive?” You pray every day that His will may be done and His kingdom may come. How can you utter this prayer with sincerity while you prefer your own will to His, and make His law yield to the vain pretexts with which your self-love seeks to elude it? Can you make this prayer—you who disturb His reign in your heart by so many impure and vain desires? you, in fine, who fear the coming of His reign, and do not desire that God should grant what you seem to pray for? No; if He, at this moment, were to offer to give you a new heart, and render you humble, and meek, and self-denying, and willing to bear the cross, your pride would revolt, and you would not accept the offer; or you would make a reservation in favour of your ruling passion, and try to accommodate your piety to your humour and fancies.

The Preacher's Dissecting Room ;

CONTAINING

PEN PORTRAITS OF REPRESENTATIVE PREACHERS.

"WITHOUT A PARABLE SPAKE HE NOT UNTO THEM."

Complaints against the modern pulpits are rife alike in social circles and literary productions. Whilst many of them are characterized by flippant ignorance and sceptical rancour, others are marked both by good judgment and holy feeling. The purpose of these Sketches is the improvement of the pulpit. Nothing would the writer deprecate more than to wound the heart or get the finger of ridicule pointed at any honest-hearted preacher of Christ; hence he has clad his characters and circumstances with a fictitious vesture—like the Great Teacher, he has spoken in parables. We shall examine representative preachers of the four great prevailing schools—the SENSATIONAL, including (1.) the tragic; (2.) the comic; (3.) the rhapsodic. The INTELLECTUAL, including (1.) the technical; (2.) the grandiloquous; (3.) the philosophic. The SPIRITUAL, including (1.) the mystical; (2.) the intuitional; and the NONDESCRIBT, including a great variety.

No. III.

THE RHAPSODIC PREACHER.

IN ancient Greece there were professional rhapsodists; men who wrote, spoke, or sang rhapsody (*ῥαψῳδία*). The rhapsody was frequently detached portions of poetry from Homer and other of the Grecian bards. The reciters of these paragraphs seem to have been men of more sentiment than intellect; hence they frequently jumbled passages together, disregarding philosophic unity and logical sequence; their object was rather to excite their hearers with passion than to indoctrinate them with truth. The pulpit has ever had its rhapsodists, men who have more sentiment than sense, more glow than radiance. The rhapsodic preacher, though belonging to the same general school (*viz.*, the sensational) as the tragic and comic, frequently differs from them in many respects. He is generally more tender. Unlike the tragic man, he has more of the lamb than the bear nature; and unlike the comic, he has more of the plaintive dove than the grinning hyæna. His speech is rather a chant than a roar, a wail than a giggle. He is more delicately organised than either; his soul has finer nerve-chords to play upon; his lachrymose reservoir is generally full to overflowing, and if the eye cannot always radiate, it seldom fails to rain. He has a stronger sense of propriety than either; he is more alive to the etiquette of ministerial life and pulpit manners. The implied rules of decency and order which govern the fashions of ecclesiastical life, he recognises and respects. He is generally grave in speech, and stately in demeanour; his nature revolts from the

unseemly, and recoils from all innovations; he has none of the stuff in him out of which our Pauls and our Luthers have been made.

No class of preachers is more numerous than those of the rhapsodic type; they abound not only in all Nonconformist sects, but constitute the great majority of what are called the Evangelicals in the Church of England. Whilst they belong to the same sensational school, and agree in their animal warmth and sensuous religiosity, they differ widely amongst themselves in many respects. Operating as they do in fields widely dissimilar in physical, social, and intellectual characteristics, they vary, from the vulgarest ranter, up to the cultured, well-bred M.A. of Oxford.

The theology of the rhapsodic preacher, in whatever field of operation he labours, is generally Evangelical; not in the New Testament sense, which means in doctrine, redemptive mercy for the race, in ethics, disinterestedness in motive, in action, magnanimity; but in the conventional sense, which means a few stereotyped metaphysical dogmas, and an intolerant hatred to Roman Catholics and Broad Churchmen, and which consigns Drs. Arnold and Channing, Pope Pius IX. and Frederick Robertson, to a common hell. This is his Evangelicalism. The sketch which we will now present is one of the best of the type. He is a gentleman by birth, an Oxford man, and a clergyman of our Church. We shall describe him as we saw and heard him last, in one of our most beautiful and spacious suburban churches. He was tall, thin, and somewhat cadaverous in aspect; his cranium was not one of those palaces which nature builds for the more stalwart of her intellectual progeny—it was small. His eyes were grey, cold, and dull, overhung by shaggy brows, which projected like a dark porch over a doorway. His mouth was unusually large, and his lips were thick and sensuous, formed rather for taking in the fruits of earth, than for giving out the truths of heaven. There was that inexpressible oiliness about the face and the look which is so characteristic of his class. He was a man of amazing activity; there was no repose in his nature; his frame seemed organized for perpetual motion, hence he was constantly preaching or platforming. On any great gathering of a conventionally Evangelical character, or even of a political type, if respectable, his little head was generally seen peering above the notabilities that crowded the oratoric stage. In Exeter Hall he was at home. In speaking there to the sweltering mass on some anti-Papal, or missionary question, he seemed to sail as complacently as a swan upon the sunny lake; the cheers of that Hall were of all forces the most trans-

porting to his nature—they lifted him even above himself. He was considered a good speaker; he had a strong voice, though not sweet, and his elocution was in every way unexceptionable; he syllabled his words, and thundered his sentences. Though his style was somewhat sophomorical, there was a wallaw-way in his voice, and a warmth in his manner, that gave him great popularity as a speaker.

EPISCOPUS.

(*To be continued*).

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Biblical Criticism.

(*Continued from p. 110.*)

Seventh clause (v. 27):—כָּלִי בְּיָדִי בְּהֵקֵי—*kālū khālyōthāy bēhhēqī*. Literally—*my reins are finished, accomplished, or destroyed in my bosom*; or bearing in mind the relation in which this clause stands to those preceding it, *should my reins have been finished, accomplished, or destroyed within my bosom*. Here is clearly a choice of meanings, of which one only is tenable. Now כָּלִי (pl. of כֶּלֶה) means literally, as we have seen, *the reins* or the kidneys, and then generally *inward parts*, first in a physiological and then in a metaphorical or psychological sense. Similarly כָּלָה *kālāh* may mean *to finish, to accomplish, to consume away, or to be destroyed*. Now Heiligstedt and some others consider that כָּלִי, *hēlāyoth*, is employed in a metaphorical sense for the seat of the emotions, and translate the clause as follows:—“*My reins are consumed (i.e., pine away—Gesenius, Henderson, &c.) within me.*” Heiligstedt explains: “*Consumuntur renes mei in sinu meo, animus meus magno Deum videndi desiderio tabescit.*” * Somewhat to the same purpose, but with a different signification of כָּלָה is the rendering of Dr. Pye Smyth—“*the thoughts of my bosom are accomplished.*” To these renderings, however, it must be objected that they suppose a sudden and violent transition of thought out of harmony with the patriarch’s known sentiments. After a

* *Commentarius Gramm. Hist. Crit.* p. 136.

triumphant outburst of joyous confidence, it was hardly likely that he would break off in order merely to say that his heart pined away within him, it is not said for what. Neither is such an almost unquiet desire for the coming deliverance consonant with the terms of the very prophecy concerning it, which referred that deliverance to a remote future, nor yet with the well known and characteristic patience of the patriarch. In the fourteenth chapter and fourteenth verse he exhibits no such impatience, when referring to precisely the same future event, but rather complete tranquillity, repose, confidence. "All the days of my appointed time," he exclaims, "will I wait, till my change [חֲלִי־פָתִי *hhālîphāthî*, literally, *my renovation*, *i.e.*, by the resurrection] come." As to Dr. Pye Smith's version, it represents the patriarch as adding, and that abruptly, what was then hardly true; for the thoughts of his bosom—his hopes—those events to which in the immediate context he had referred, were not accomplished, neither are yet accomplished. Clearly, therefore, these versions of the clause are encumbered with insuperable difficulties.

Let us, however, suppose the existence of no such violent transition of thought, but rather that the clause is in intimate connexion with those preceding it, and nothing is more natural than that Job intended a repetition, for the sake of emphasis, of what had been asserted in verse 26. We, therefore, take בְּלִי־יָדַי *my reins*, or generally *the inward parts*, in the literal physiological acceptation of the terms; and in like manner קָלָה *kālāh* is taken in its natural, and in no strained or inferred signification. Further, the preterite קָלָה *kālū* is interpreted, in the absence of a connecting conjunction, as being equivalent to a perfect subjunctive (Gesen. Heb. Gr. on the use of the Praeter, Pt. III. § 124-5), by which rendering the connexion of thought is left undisturbed, and the homogeneity of the whole prophetic paragraph is preserved. Finally, חֵיק *sinus, bosom*, is taken (cf. Eccl. vii. 9), as equivalent to קֶרֶב, so that בְּחֵיקִי signifies merely *within me*, or *in the midst of me*, *i.e.*, of my body. As thus viewed, then, the clause would read thus *should my reins [i.e., my inward parts, my vitals] have been con-*

sumed within me. Here manifestly the force of the clause would be that it totally excluded the idea of the patriarch's seeing God in His then body; and, as having such a meaning, it is in perfect harmony with verse 26. There is no violent transition—no introduction of any new thought; but the whole prophecy is in admirable equipoise—is totally coherent and homogeneous both in grammar and in sentiment.

Now as thus interpreted, the prophecy before us clearly justifies the doctrinal inferences with which this paper opened.

1. It proves the divinity of Christ; for He is at once termed גֹּאֵל *gōēl* and אֱלֹהִים *ēlōāh*. And further, with His appearance upon the scene, two other events of such a nature as to leave no doubt that the language refers to the Messiah, and to Him as being Divine, are connected. These two events are, the resurrection of the patriarch's body, and the possibility of beholding God with the bodily eyes.
2. The prophecy clearly refers to the office and work of Christ as the Redeemer (*Goēl*).
3. It teaches His then future advent into the world; and by implication, as we have seen, His veritable incarnation. See observations on the expressions אֲחֵיהֶם אֱלֹהִים—Θεὸν ὁψονται.
4. It teaches the resurrection from the dead as resultant upon the advent of the Messiah. Some interpreters dispute this, maintaining that the passage refers only to merely temporal restitution—so Barnes, Heiligstedt, Maurer, &c. But if that were all, why the wish to have his hope graven in the rock for ever, so that remote generations might read it? Surely, if that were all, no such imperishable memorial was needed. So ordinary an event called for no such extraordinary means of preservation from forgetfulness. Read, however, the exordium of the patriarch in the light of the doctrine of the resurrection, and it appears at once, and not until then, apt and eloquent. But further, the patriarch entertained no such expectation as that which is here ascribed to him. He contemplated only an early death. The idea of a reverse of fortune never entered his mind. So far was he from any such anticipation, that he exclaimed: (Job xiv. 15) “O that thou wouldst hide me in the grave . . . until thy wrath be overpast (*i.e.* until the resurrection).” But thirdly, this alleged expectation of

future temporal good fortune would have been equally incompatible with the position taken up by the patriarch in opposition to his friends. They maintained that good and evil received their righteous retribution in this present life; and hence, that Job's afflictions were an evidence of secret ungodliness. The patriarch, however, earnestly controverted this opinion. He maintained that retribution was reserved to the future life; that here the righteous were frequently afflicted, while the wicked as frequently were permitted to revel in prosperity (chap. xxi. *passim*). Was it then consonant with such an argument that the patriarch should speak of future temporal prosperity? or, was it not, rather every way more likely that he would refer, agreeably to his principles as overagainst those of his friends, the vindication of his character to that remote future state, to which a full and equitable retribution, alike of the just and the unjust, stood deferred. The argument of the patriarch demands that his words should receive no other interpretation than that which we have already given. It is alleged, however, that Job elsewhere employs language inconsistent with the doctrine of the resurrection. This objection is utterly valueless. The language referred to is no stronger than that used by many Christian writers, who, of course, could not be held to be answerable to any such charge. But further, it may be safely asserted that the passage before us is not the only one in which the doctrine of the resurrection is propounded by the patriarch, for in chap. xiv. 7-15, the resurrection of the body is as clearly taught as in any portion of the Old Testament Scriptures. It is further objected, the Jews did not regard the text as exhibiting the doctrine of the resurrection; but, considering the erroneous views which prevailed among the Jews as to their own Scriptures, that circumstance need not be deemed as in any way decisive of its meaning. The question is not as to what Jewish writers may have thought of the passage, but as to whether, when fairly interpreted, the passage does or does not enunciate the dogma in question. To that question, we maintain, there is but one, and that an affirmative answer. Nearly the whole Christian world is

agreed upon the point. That the resurrection of the body is here taught was the opinion of Clemens Romanus,* Origen,† Cyrillus of Jerusalem,‡ Ambrosius,§ Epiphanius,|| Rufinus,¶ Hieronymus, Luther, Michaelis, Rosenmüller,** Schultens, Henderson, and many others. This was also, evidently the opinion of our translators, and was certainly that adopted by the Anglican Church. And although great names might be cited in favour of an opposite opinion, the grounds upon which such adverse opinion has been based have been already passed in review, and found to be, taken either singly or collectively, wholly insufficient to warrant its entertainment. Any other interpretation, in a word, than that which we have laid down, and which, in substance, has been affirmed in our Authorized Version, is beset by inadmissible contradictions and insuperable difficulties.

DR. CLARK, F.R.A.S.,

Memel, Prussia.

British Chaplain.

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A Talmudic Study with St. Paul;

OR,

CLEANINGS FROM DELITZSCH'S NOTES TO HIS "PAULUS DES APOSTELS BRIEF AN DIE RÖMER IN DAS HEBRÄISCHE ÜBERSETZT UND AUS TALMUD UND MIDRASH ERLÄUTERT" (PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS TRANSLATED INTO HEBREW AND ELUCIDATED FROM THE TALMUD AND MIDRASH).

ALTHOUGH no portion of the Talmud or Midrash was written so early as the time of the Apostle, the following allusions show how deeply his mind was imbued with the traditional Jewish teachings which had been handed down from *lip to lip* by the Rabbis, and were subsequently committed to writing.

Chapter I.—1. "*Called to be an Apostle.*" Not מִלֵּשׁ,

* In Epist. I. ad Corinth. § 26. † Commentar. in Matt. xxii. 23, et seq. ‡ Cateches. xviii. §§ 14-20. § In Ps. cxviii. Sern. 10. || Ancorat. §§ 89-103. ¶ Exposit. symb. in opp, Cyprian. ** Scholia in Vet. Test. ed. II.

but שְׁלִיחַ (שְׁלִיחַ), a name which the Midrash (*Aboth de-Rabbi Nathan*, c. 34¹) reckons among the ten names of the prophets, i.e., of the Messenger of God appointed in an extraordinary manner.

2. "Promises," &c. It is frequently stated in the Talmud (e.g. *Sanhedrin*,² 99^a) that the time of the Messiah is the prophetic goal of all the prophets, and the happiness which the time of Messiah will bring with it is described as so great, that "no eye hath seen it, and it has not entered into the heart of any prophet."

4. "According to the spirit of holiness," i.e., the inner divine nature which broke through the form of the servant in the resurrection. The author of the MS. *Kethab Emeth*³ expresses himself similarly in his first letter: "According to his Holy Spirit, which is ever-living and unchangeable, we call Him Messiah, Son of David; and in relation to His corporeal origin, He is called Messiah, Son of Joseph. The Messiah, Son of Joseph, is put to death, but the Messiah, Son of David, i.e., the Messiah according to His spiritual side, remains; after the Messiah, Son of Joseph, has been put to death, He rises on the third day from His grave, and the Messiah, Son of David, the ever-living, remains."

5. "His Name." The name of the Messiah is said, *Nedarim*,⁴ 39^b, to have been one of the seven things created before the foundation of the world.

9. "Whom I serve," &c. We read, in *Sifri*⁵ on Deut xi. 13,

¹ A collection of sentences following the Mishna *Aboth*, from the post-Talmudic time, called after R. Nathan, the contemporary of R. Jehuda, the editor of the Mishna. *Aboth* (Fathers), the abbreviated form for *Mishna Aboth*, or *Pirke Aboth* (*Capitula Patrum*), is the title of a Mishna tract, containing remarkable sayings of the Fathers, beginning with the men of the Greek Synagogue and the oldest Heads of the Sanhedrim.

² A Talmudic Tract on the Chief Court or Sanhedrim.

³ A manuscript, in which a celebrated Jewish scholar in Poland declares his faith in Jesus as Messiah.

⁴ A Talmudic Tract on Vows.

⁵ *Sifri* (Books) is a Midrash on Numbers and Deut., belonging to the age of the Mishna. There is also *Sifra* (the Book) on Levit., and *Mechilta* (i.e. regulation) on Exod.

that as altar-service is termed עֲבֹדָה (λατρεία), so prayer is termed עֲבֹדָה.

16. *Sifri*, 40^a. "The crown of the law surmounts the crown of the priesthood and the crown of royalty."

17. "*The Just*," &c. According to *Maccoth*,¹ 23^b—24^a, 613 commands were revealed to Moses, and afterwards David reduced them to 11 (Psa. xv.), Isaiah to 6 (xxxiii. 15), Micah to 3 (vi. 8), then again Isaiah to 2 (lvi. 1), and Amos came and reduced them to 1 (v. 4), or rather Habakkuk reduced them to the One: The Just shall live by his faith.

24. The same principle is laid down, *Pirke Aboth*, iv. 2: Every fulfilment of duty is rewarded by another, and every sin is punished by another. *Shabbath*,² 104^a: "He who strives to purify himself obtains the power to do so, and to him who wishes to pollute himself the gate (of vice) is opened." The Jerus. Talm. says: "He who hedges himself around is hedged around, and he who exposes himself is exposed."

26-27. The passage, parallelized by Biesenthal, in *Sifri* on Lev. xviii. 3 (f. 172^a ed. *Malbin*), contains a similar description of the abominable sensuality of the Canaanites: "The man marries the man, and the woman the woman; the man marries mother and daughter together, and one woman is married by two."

"*Men with men*," &c. According to the Jerus., *Berachoth*,³ ix. 14, this sin so prevailed among the Jews that it was sufficient to constitute the cause of the destruction of the Temple.

"*In themselves*." According to the principle of retribution, retributive punishment begins in the member that originates the transgression.—See *Sifri* on Numb. v. 27.

II.—10. "*Glory*," &c. *Sifri* on Numb. vi. 26: "Great is the peace, for it is given to him who practises righteousness; as Isaiah says (xxxii. 7), 'the effect of righteousness is peace.'"

13. "*Not the hearers*." The reference is to the public reading

¹ A Talmudic Tract on Scourging.

² A Tract on the Festival of the Sabbath.

³ An expository Talmudic Tract on Benedictions and Prayers.

and exposition of the law. Simeon-ben-Gamaliel (the son of Paul's own master), says, *Aboth* i. 17, "Not study, but practice, is the chief thing."

17. "*And rested*," &c. So *Tanchuma*,¹ 200^b: "I become a shield to that man who relies upon the Law."

22. "*Thou that abhorrest idols*," &c. Comp. *Aboda zara*,² 53^b, where the double case of an idol being stolen, either by a heathen or a Jew, is supposed: "If an Israelite stole it, the object would be to turn it into money by selling it to a heathen, who would again worship it." The maxim of R. Samuel, *Aboda zara*, 52^a: "If it has been carved as an idol, you must not covet it; but if it has been profaned as an idol, you may take it," was misleading. The Jew might think that in taking away a heathen idol he did a good work, because he deprived the heathen worshipper of the object of his false worship. But he was forbidden to do this by the precept laid down in the *Mischna*,³ iv. 4, "That though a heathen might profane a heathen idol, a Jew might not." Roman literature in the Imperial age (*e.g.*, Petronius) shows that temple-robbing was a common crime.

26. "Uncircumcised" = non-Israelite—*Nedarim*, 31^b.

III.—1. "*What profit?*" &c. This question is answered, *Nedarim*, 31^b, in a series of sayings, beginning גדולה מילה (great is circumcision). The Apostle contradicts what is said in *Pirke Eliezer*,⁴ c. 29, and elsewhere, that "Our Father

¹ The oldest Midrash known as extant on the Pentateuch (also called *Jelamdenu*, from a form which it often adopts, ילמדנו רבנו), according to Zunz, composed or rather compiled in Southern Italy about 850.

² "*Aboda zara*," עבודה זרה (abbreviated ע"ז). A Talmudic Tract on Idolatry and Heathenism.

³ The body (collection) of secondary, *i.e.*, traditional law (from שנה to repeat, δευτεροῦν, denominatively, to teach the traditional law), reduced to writing in the third century in Palestine.

⁴ A haggadic work named after R. Eliezer b. Hyrcanus (who belonged to first century of our era), but not written earlier than the eighth century. It follows the course of the Sacred History. *Haggada* (הגדה = enarratio), instruction in matters of faith and life, in the form of tales, parables, and memorable sayings. The term *haggadic* is applied to the dogmatico-ethical element of tradition and the Codex. In general

Abraham brought no fruit of good works before he was circumcised." Now that the light of Christianity has risen upon Judaism, such an assertion as we find in the same chapter of this treatise—"Every one who eats with a heathen eats as with a dog; as the dog is uncircumcised, so is the heathen man"—has become impossible.

4. *Psa. li. 6.* This same passage from the Psalms is quoted in *Sifri* on Deut. xxxii. 4, as a testimony on the part of man to the justice of the Divine government. This acknowledgment, which occupies an important place in the Jewish eschatology, is called צדיק חַיִּין.

5. "*As a man.*" Like and yet different from כלשון בני אדם (according to the tongue of the sons of Adam), in the frequent phrase, e.g., *Sifri*, 184^b. דברה תורה כלשון בני אדם (the word of the law according, &c.); for when Paul says, κατ' ἀνθρώπον λέγω, he means, "after the common mode of human judgment" (Von Hofmann, *Heilige Schrift neuen Testaments*, 3.83); whereas the Hebrew form refers to the ordinary human, anthropomorphic mode of expression.

19. "*What things soever the law saith.*" The preceding Scripture quotations are from the *Chethubim* and *Nebiymim*. The Talm. also occasionally cites them, e.g. *Erubin*,¹ 58^a.

21. "*Righteousness of God.*" The name given to Messiah, משיח צדקנו (Messiah our righteousness), bears the impress of the truth that this righteousness is the chief fruit of His work. *Pesikta rabbathi*,² 78^a (comp. *Jalkut. Shimoni* on

the Talm. represents the Halacha, and the Midrash the Haggada, though there is a mixture of the Hag. in the Talm., and of the Hal. in the Midr. Halacha הִלָּכָה=usage, not in the sense of *consuetudo*, but *jus a majoribus traditum*, the traditional which has become law. The *Halachic* means the *juridical* element of tradition and the Codex.

¹ A Talmudic Tract on connecting separated spaces to facilitate free movement on the Sabbath.

² *Pesikta*=*sectio*. A class of Midrashic works not containing a continuous commentary on any Biblical book, but elucidating single passages rather in the style of rhapsody. To this class belong—1. *Pesikta de Rab. Cahana*, belonging to the age of the Palestine Talm., and called after Cahana, who migrated from Babylon to Palestine, and edited the chief part of it; 2. *Pesikta rabbathi*, which, in its present form, bears date 845 of our era. The *Pesikta zutarta*, a compilation on the Penta-

Isa. lx.¹) also shows that this righteousness is acquired by His substitutionary suffering and death.

25. "*As ἱλαστήριον through faith in His blood.*" The old synagogal literature constantly connects the idea of propitiation with the Ark of the Covenant. Jerus. *Shekalim*² i., Halacha 1, it is remarked: "Let the gold of the Capporeth (Ark of Covenant) come and atone for the gold of the calf." The Cabbala, however, only allows the ideas of covering over and binding up, and not that of atonement.

IV.—3. "*It was counted to Him for righteousness.*" Comp. *Mechilta* on Ex. xiv. 31, where the entire exposition is a commendation of faith. "Our fathers were accounted worthy to receive the Holy Spirit, and to sing songs to God, because they believed, and it was only through the merit of faith that our father Abraham inherited the present and the future world."

10. In *Pirke R. Eliezer*, c. 31, Abraham answers the command of God to offer up his son, by the question, "Which son, the son of uncircumcision or of circumcision?"

11, 12. "*Abraham, the father of all them that believe.*" So the old synag. literature. In a Selicha (penitential prayer, sometimes in rhyme) on the Day of Atonement, the congregation prays: "Early in the morning remember the mercy, the grace bestowed on Abraham, the father of my ancestors, whom Thou didst choose, and who believed in Thee, the first of my believers." The Jerus. Gemara,³ *Biccurim* I. 4., acknow-

teach and the five Megilloth, by R. Tobias b. Eliezer in Mainz. It mentions the persecution of the Jews under the first crusade, and misappropriates the name *Pesikta*.

¹ *Jalkut* (from לקט to collect), a Midr. compilation of continuous comments on the Books of Scripture, in extracts from the older Midr. and Talm. literature. The oldest is the *Jalkut Schimôni* by R. ha-Darschan (according to Zunz, at the beginning of the thirteenth century). The *Jalkut Chadash* is a recent collection from the Sohar literature. Last Ed., Lemberg 1868.

² A Talmudic Tract on the Tax of the Half-shekel or Didrachm (comp. Matt. xvii. 24).

³ *Gemara*, from גמר to complete; denom. to learn the Gemara, and generally to learn a juridical commentary, forming an exposition or

ledges that Abraham was the father, not only of the believing Israelites, but of believers from among the heathen. The proselyte from paganism, when he brought his first fruits, was permitted to use the prayer Deut. xxvi. 3-10, and to call the patriarchs his fathers, for Abraham, father of multitude, is derived from Abram, the father of Aram. "*Circumc. a seal.*" So *Shemoth rabba*, c. 19, and often.

14. Οἱ ἐκ νόμου. Comp. *Pesikta de Rab. Cahana* 44^b, ed. Buber, היה בן תורה: "He was a son of the law." *Tanchuma*, 99^b, כהנים בני תורה: "Priests, sons of the law."

17. "*Who quickeneth,*" &c. Comp. the anti-Sadducaic argument for the resurrection, *Sanhedrin*, 91^a: "That which was not has come to life," &c.

23, 24. "*Not for his sake alone.*" Meyer refers to a passage, *Bereshith rabba*,¹ c. 40, which runs thus: "You find that whatever is recounted of Abraham is repeated in the history of his children, *i.e.* of Israel."

Selected and Translated by
JOHN GILL.

(To be continued.)

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

THE MORAL DISCIPLINE OF MAN.

"The Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments or no."—Deut. viii. 2.

THE history of the Hebrews,

from their exodus in Egypt to their entrance into the Promised Land, may be usefully studied as a parable of the moral discipline of mankind. The points of analogy are obvious, patent, and often exhibited. We shall take the text as an illustration of true spiritual discipline, and it sug-

completion of the Mishna, written chiefly in Aramaic. *Biccurim*, a Talmudic Tract on the offering of the first fruits of the ground.

¹ The first portion of the *Midrash rabba*. The term *Rabboth* is applied to the great Midrashim on the Pentateuch and the five Megilloth, collected into a thesaurus in the Middle Ages. That on Levit. is called *Bayikra rabba*; on Canticles, *Schir ha-schirim rabba*; on Solomon the Preacher, *Cohemoth rabba*.

gests the following thoughts concerning it:—

I. It is a HUMBLING work. "To humble thee." Pride has been regarded as the parent sin, the tap-root of all the moral evil in the universe. To bring the soul down from all its proud conceits, vain imaginations, and ambitious aims, and to inspire it with the profoundest sense of its own moral unworthiness, is an essential part of the work of soul discipline. Indeed this is the first lesson in its school. Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Paul, Peter—all learnt this lesson, and felt it profoundly.

II. It is a SELF-REVEALING work. "To prove thee, and to know what was in thine heart." Omniscience does not require to test us in order to know what is in our hearts, for He knows what we have been, what we are, and ever shall be; but man wants the knowledge of his own heart. Of this all unregenerate men are lamentably ignorant. Many fancy themselves saints when they are fiends. This self-revelament requires trials. "The evil principle," says one, "sleeps in the spirit as the evil monster in the placid waters of the Nile; and it is only the hot sun, or the sweep of the fierce tempest, that can draw or drive it forth in its malignant manifestations."

III. It is a DIVINE work. "The Lord thy God led thee," &c. God alone is the true

moral schoolmaster; no one but He can effectually discipline the soul. He knows all its devils, and knows how to drive them out. He does this—(1.) By the dispensation of events. (2.) By the realities of the Gospel. (3.) By His influence on conscience. Life, rightly regarded, is a grand moral school, in which the Great Father is constantly engaged in making men meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

IV. It is a SLOW work. "Forty years in the wilderness." A long time. Bad men cannot become good at once; the eternal laws of mind preclude the possibility. No priest can charm a bad man into goodness on his death-bed. He who professes to do so is an impostor as dangerous as he is impious. You cannot expect to become good at once. Goodness is not an impression, an act, or even a habit; it is a character, and characters are of slow growth. Goodness is not a manufacture which may be accomplished at once with an adequate amount of executive agency. It is a growth, and requires cultivation, planting, nourishing, and seasonal changes. It is not a commission that can be bought in the great army of God; it is a dignity that can only be won by long, severe, and triumphant fighting.

RIGOROUSNESS AND CLEMENCY
IN GOD'S PROCEDURE WITH
MAN.

"Mercy and truth are met together: righteousness and peace have kissed each other."—Ps. lxxxv. 10. "Mercy rejoiceth against judgment."—James ii. 13.

THE words "truth," "righteousness," and "judgment" in these passages we shall take to represent the stern, the inflexible, and severe in God's dealing with men; and the words "mercy" and "peace" to represent the mild and the clement. Hence we shall raise from the words two observations:—

I. That in God's procedure with man these principles are found in HARMONIOUS CO-OPERATION. "Mercy and truth are met together: righteousness and peace have kissed each other." I know that these words have often been employed in crude theologies to illustrate a battling of the Divine attributes. The Father of infinite love has been represented as meeting with immense difficulties in Himself in His endeavour to redeem the world. Justice and mercy had a long and tremendous struggle within Him. Thank God, this blasphemy is dying away. In God there is no distinction between "mercy and righteousness." The distinction is only in our conceptions, and in the modes in which He seems to appear to us.

First: We think we see

these two principles harmoniously operating in God's dealing with us through the *phenomena of nature*. In the earthquake and the tornado, in the fierce lightnings and the rolling thunders, in the raging oceans and the furious winds, we feel ourselves confronted with the stern, the rigorous, and the terrible; but in the serene and the sunny we feel ourselves in the presence of the mild and the lenient. Both in nature work together, they "kiss each other," and bring about the good ordained.

Secondly: We think we see these two principles harmoniously operating in God's dealing with us through the *events of human history*. When we read the history of our race—its wars, famines, pestilences, and innumerable calamities—we are brought before the severe and awful in God; whilst in the happiness of tribes, the prosperity of nations, and the gradual advancement of the race, we see the merciful and the kind; but both principles co-operate, the rigorous and the clement. They "meet and kiss each other." They are in a blessed partnership in their endeavours to make humanity what God would have it be.

Thirdly: We think we see these two principles harmoniously operating in God's dealing with us through the *circumstances of individual life*. In the various afflictions, phy-

sical, intellectual, and social, which every man has, God in the sterner aspects of His character appears before us; whilst in the pleasures and enjoyments of our life He faces us in an aspect tender and kind. But both principles co-operate. "Our light afflictions, which are but for a moment," &c.

Fourthly: We think we see these two principles harmoniously operating in God's dealing with us through the *means of redemptive Providence*. In the life of Christ, God seems in one aspect terribly righteous, on the other side infinitely merciful, but the two are one; they meet, kiss, and co-operate in making a perfect Saviour. It is so in the redemptive training of men for everlasting blessedness. First, law comes to the man with its flashing light and terrible thunder, rousing conscience, and kindling the terrible flames of remorse, and the Divine One seems rigorous and awful. Then comes the assurance of forgiveness, the centralizing the affections in infinite love, and all in God seems tender and merciful. But the two principles meet together and co-operate in bringing about the same blessed result, viz., the training of the soul for a higher life.

II. That though these principles harmoniously co-operate in God's procedure with man, ONE IS EVER IN THE AS-

CENDANT. "Mercy rejoiceth against judgment."

First: In the *phenomena of nature* you see more of the clement than the stern. The mild, and not the rigorous, is the queen of nature; storms and earthquakes, thunderings and lightnings are but the exceptions; sunny days, serene earth, and calm atmospheres are the rule. "Mercy rejoiceth." She has the rule.

Secondly: In the *events of human history* you see more of the clement than the stern. History, it is true, records bloody wars, blasting pestilences, and writhing famines, but these after all are only exceptions in God's dispensations with mankind; peace, health, and plenty, have been the rule. "Mercy rejoiceth against judgment." She has reigned, she has kept the throne.

Thirdly: In the *circumstances of individual life* you see more of the clement than the stern. It is true we have our afflictions and our sorrows, but these are exceptions. As a rule, the existence of most men is that of health and judgment; goodness and mercy follow us. "Mercy rejoiceth against judgment," in our experience.

Fourthly: In the *means of redemptive Providence* you see more of the clement than the stern. In the Christian life there have been the pains connected with conviction, repentance, and conversion; but

these are in the initial stages of the Christian life: succeeding stages are generally calm, and often jubilant, and the end everlasting life. "Mercy rejoiceth against judgment."

CONCLUSION: Let us exercise unbounded confidence in the procedure of God towards us. He is love; justice and mercy are but modifications of love. His chastisement, which seems to us rigorous and severe, is but parental affection.

A WEAK WORLD MADE STRONG.

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."—Romans v. 6.

CHRISTIANITY is built on facts; these facts are not only well authenticated but most intelligible, profoundly significant, and infinitely important. There are three facts suggested by these words:—

I. The MORAL PROSTRATION OF HUMANITY. "When we were yet without strength." What does this mean? Not without muscular or mental strength, but without *moral* strength.

First: Without strength to *effect the deliverance of self*. The souls of all were carnally sold under sin. Man, the world over, felt this, felt it profoundly, and groaned under it for ages. His cry was—"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?" &c. Philosophers, priests, poets, tried to deliver the soul, but failed.

Secondly: Without strength to *render acceptable service to*

the Creator. "Wherewithal shall we come before the Lord and how shall we bow before the Most High God?" This is another problem that rested as a burden on the soul.

Thirdly: Without strength *with calmness to face the future*. Deep in the hearts of all men was the belief in a future life, but that future rose before them in aspects so terrible that they recoiled from it with terror. No weakness so distressing as this; moral powerlessness is not only a curse but a *crime*. Yet all unregenerate men are the subjects of this lamentable prostration. They are "without strength."

II. The RE-INVIGORATING POWER OF CHRIST'S DEATH. "In due time Christ died for the ungodly."

First: Christ's death enables man *to deliver himself*. It generates within him a new spiritual life, by which he throws off its enthrallments as the winged chrysalis its crust. Christ's death is the life of souls.

Secondly: Christ's death enables man to render *acceptable service to God*. It presents to him the right motive and the right method.

Thirdly: Christ's death enables man *calmly to face the future*. Christ's death reveals a bright future, and furnishes the means for attaining it. Christ's death is the moral power of the world. It inspires men with love—love is power; with faith—faith is

power; with hope—hope is power; with courage—courage is power.

III. The SEASONABLE PERIOD OF THE REDEEMER'S MISSION. "In due time," or, as in margin, "According to the time."

First: It was at a time *when the world was prepared to appreciate it*. Mankind had tried every means they could invent to deliver themselves from the power of sin, to attain the approval of their Maker, and to win a bright future, but had failed. Four thousand years of earnest philosophizings and sacerdotal labour, legislative enactments, and moral teachings, had signally failed. "The world by wisdom knew not God." The intellect of Judea, Greece, Rome, all failed. The world was prostrate in hopelessness.

Secondly: It was at *the time appointed by heaven*. The time had been designated by the prophets (Gen. xlix. 10; Dan. ix. 27; John xvii. 1).

Thirdly: It was at a time *most favourable for the universal diffusion of the fact*. (1.) There was a general expectation of a Great Deliverer. (2.) The world was at peace, and mainly under the control of one Government—Rome. (3.) The Greek language was all but universally spoken. (4.) Communications were opened up between all the villages, towns, and cities of the world. "In due time Christ died."

MORAL ONWARDNESS.

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."—Philip. iii. 13, 14.

THE expression, "to have apprehended," here means to lay hold, to have grasped. The words "I do" are not in the original, they are supplied by the translators; still the idea is implied. The Grecian racecourse was well known to Paul, and to all his readers, and hence he often uses it as a figure to illustrate the Christian life. The subject is spiritual advancement, onwardness in Divine excellence. The text suggests that this progress implies three things:—

I. A CONSCIOUS DISSATISFACTION WITH THE PRESENT. By dissatisfaction with the present I mean not dissatisfaction with the events and circumstances of life—Divine providences—this would be foolish and impious,—but with present moral attainments; for in the 12th verse he says, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect," &c. He was not satisfied with his present assimilation to Christ. He painfully felt the discrepancy. This dissatisfaction is ever the first step in soul progress, and ever the impelling motive afterwards. Indeed dissatis-

faction with present attainments is the spring of all advancement in every department of life. Dissatisfied with huts, men build houses; with the loose skin of beasts for their covering, they manufacture garments; with calligraphy, they invent the printing-press; with waggons, they construct steam-engines. He who feels satisfied with what he has, whether it be material, mental, or spiritual, will never seek to lay hold of something yet unattained.

II. A COMPARATIVE OBLIVIOUSNESS TO THE PAST. "Forgetting those things which are behind." The Olympic racer did not look behind him on the course, but on to the goal, until he reached and grasped the pole. In soul onwardness there must be a comparative obliviousness. We say comparative. Of course there must be, and ought to be, remembrances of past mercies to inspire our gratitude, of past sins to humble us before God. But attention to the past should be as nothing to that which we give to the future. Let the past go; it is irreparable and unavailing; the grand future must loom before us and absorb the soul. Look not behind you. Keep your eyes right onward upon the enchanting scenes that are spread out on the sunny heights.

III. A CONCENTRATED STRUGGLE FOR THE FUTURE. "I press towards the mark of the

prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." The prize of the Grecian racer was a garland of olive or laurel, or pine or apple. What is the moral prize? Moral perfection. To this all men are Divinely called in Christ Jesus. In the true moral race men are to reach forth, not after happiness as an end, but after holiness; not after paradise, but after perfection.

This requires concentration. "This one thing I do." There must be no half-heartedness, no divided faculties; it must be the one thing—the whole soul must be set upon it. Concentration is essential to success in almost every department of life. Noah built his ark because he concentrated his being on the work. Abraham lived a pilgrim life because he set his heart on a city that had a foundation. Napoleon became nearly the master of Europe because he had set his heart on the infernal work. Demosthenes became one of the greatest orators of the world because oratory was the work on which he set his heart. So in all things. The attainment of holiness must be the "one thing" in life. Learning, literature, business, recreation, art, all must be rendered subservient to this "one thing."*

* See *Homilist*, 3rd series, 3rd vol., p. 18.

Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. CCXCVI.)

Subject: SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE.

"My son, eat thou honey, because it is good; and the honeycomb, which is sweet to thy taste: so shall the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul: when thou hast found it, then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off."
—Prov. xxiv. 13, 14.

THE subject of these words is *spiritual knowledge*—a subject which we have had frequently to notice in our passage through this wonderful book. There are many sciences, but the science of God is the root science, that which gives life, unity, and beauty to every branch of knowledge; it is the central science,—that which gives life, and warmth, and harmony to every other department of intelligence. No man has a true knowledge of anything, unless he knows God. What is it to know God? It is something more than to know the works of His hands, or the facts of His history. To know a man I must be in possession of the man's spirit, I must be influenced by the same motives, susceptible of the same impressions, inspired by the same aims. I may know all about a man's external history, well versed in every part of his biography, and yet be ignorant of himself. It is so with God: to know God I must participate in that love which is the spring of all His actions, the heart of His heart. "He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love." This is the knowledge which is essential to our well-being. "This

is life eternal to know Thee," &c. The text suggests three remarks concerning it:—

I. It is WHOLESOME. "My son, eat thou honey, because it is good." Honey was one of the choice productions of Canaan. It was used by its inhabitants as an article of diet, it was not only delicious to the palate, but strengthening to the frame. When Jesus appeared to His disciples after His resurrection, it is said that "When they believed not for joy, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? and they gave Him a piece of broiled fish and an honeycomb." Solomon says in effect:—that what honey is to the body in strengthening it, spiritual knowledge is to the mind—"it is good." Divine knowledge is the aliment for man's spiritual nature; without it there is no moral strength; our faculties require God Himself to feed upon. Its bread is not any part or the whole of His creation, but He Himself. Without God it starves. He is the food of the intellect, the affections, the imagination, the conscience. The "soul crieth out for the living God."

II. It is DELECTABLE. "And the honeycomb, which is sweet to the taste." God's goodness in nature appears in this as well as in all other things: that the provisions essential to man's strength He has made *palatable* to the taste. He might have made the fruits of the earth which we require for our support bitter

as gall, abhorrent to our taste, but He has made all sweet. Honey is not only strengthening, but "sweet." The pleasures of spiritual knowledge are of the most exquisite kind. It delights every faculty:—imagination, by opening up enchanting realms of beauty; conscience, by bringing on its ears the transporting music of God's approval; hope, by pointing it to the ever-brightening future; taste,—what said David? "How sweet are thy words unto my taste, yea, sweeter than honey to my taste, sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb."

III. It is SATISFYING. "When thou hast found it, then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off." There shall be a reward: what a reward! Goodness is its own reward, and the reward is equal to the highest "expectation." It includes a "love that passeth all knowledge," a "peace that passeth all understanding," "riches that are unsearchable," a "joy that is unspeakable and full of glory."

CONCLUSION. Let us search diligently for this knowledge. Remember that the Gospel of Christ is the Canaan in which this honey abounds, the high rocks in which it is found. This is *the* knowledge to obtain. "He," says an old writer, "is the best grammarian who has learned to speak the truth from his heart: the best astronomer who has conversation in heaven: the best musician who has learned to sing the praise of his God: the best arithmetician who so numbers his days, as to apply his heart to wisdom. He is knowing in ethics who trains up his family in the Lord: he

is the best economist who is wise to salvation, prudent in giving and taking good counsel: he is the best politician, and he is a good linguist, that speaks the language of Canaan." You can never get too much of this knowledge: a man may eat too much honey, good as it is. An intemperate use of it will produce nausea and feebleness: not so with this knowledge.

(No. CCXCVII.)

Subject: THE HOSTILITY OF THE WICKED TOWARDS THE GOOD.

"Lay not wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous; spoil not his resting place. For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief."—Prov. xxiv. 15, 16.

THESE words lead us to make three remarks in relation of the enmity of the wicked towards the good:—

I. They **WOULD RUIN** the good. This seems to be implied in the prohibition: "Lay not wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous; spoil not his resting place." From the Fall to this hour there has been in the mind of the wicked an aversion to the truly righteous. "The seed of the serpent is at enmity with the seed of the woman." In every chapter of human history this enmity is revealed; there were times when, in this country, it manifested itself by the infliction of the most infernal tortures. Those days are gone, but with them the spirit of hostility is not gone—it works still in sneers, inuendoes, slanders, &c.; it lays "wait against the dwelling place of the righteous," it seeks to "spoil their resting place." Would not those men

who repudiate the religion of Christ, and who constitute, alas! the great majority in this country, be delighted to have theatres and places of amusement take the place of church and chapel; and Shakespeare, Burns, &c., to take the place of the grand old Bible.

II. They CANNOT RUIN the good. "For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again." A just man may fall into calamity (for it is *calamity* and not *immorality* that is referred to); through their malignant endeavours they may darken his reputation, they may mar the harmony of his social circle, they may thwart his secular plans, they may reduce him to bankruptcy, but he shall rise again. There is a marvellous buoyancy in goodness; if the just man who has fallen in calamity rises not to his former secular position, he rises in spirit above the trial—his religion, like a life-boat, bears him over the billows, he braves the tempest, and outrides the storm. Besides this elasticity of goodness, God's providential hand will be outstretched to raise the fallen man—a just man is near to the heart of God—"He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of my eye." "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." "He shall deliver thee in six troubles, yea, in seven shall no evil touch thee." "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." He that is engaged, therefore, in endeavouring to injure the good, is engaged in a fruitless work. The just man is destined to rise—no sea of persecution is deep enough to drown him; he

will rise, and, like his Master, walk upon the waters.

III. They ruin THEMSELVES IN THE ATTEMPT. "The wicked shall fall into mischief." "He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors. Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehoods. He made a pit and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made. His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate."—Psalm vii. 13-16. Those who seek to injure the good often fall into mischief here, and are ruined. History abounds with examples of this fact. The ball which the wicked have shot against the righteous rebounds on their own head, and strikes them down; they are hanged on the gallows which they have prepared for others. But at last the mischief that they will fall into will be irretrievable and tremendous. The path of the sinner is a path of self-entrapment.

(No. CCXCVIII.)

Subject: REVENGE.

"Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth: lest the Lord see it, and it displease Him, and He turn away His wrath from him."—Prov. xxiv. 17, 18.

REVENGE, I may define, as a perversion of that innate sentiment of repugnance to wrong as wrong; antagonism to wrong is a primary instinct of our moral nature. Revenge is this instinct, grown into a wild passion, and directed against the person who committed the wrong, rather than against the

wrong itself. Johnson makes a distinction between vengeance and revenge. Injuries, he says, are revenged; crimes are avenged. The former is an act of passion, the latter of justice. Our definition may be faulty, but we know the thing—know it from sad experience; we have felt its fires ourselves; we have seen its flash, and heard its thunders in others. It is a most implacable passion. Its voice is the voice of Shylock himself—

"I'll have my bond: I will not hear thee speak:

I'll have my bond: and therefore speak no more.

I'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool,

To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield

To Christian intercessors."

The text directs our attention to three things in relation to revenge.

I. The OBJECT of revenge. "Thine enemy." Men are enemies to men. This is a fact as saddening as it is unquestionable. That children of the same Great Father, partakers of the same nature, subject to the same administration, pilgrims to the same eternity, should be at enmity with each other, implies that some terrible change has taken place in the moral nature of man. Humanity is not as it came from the hand of the Great Father of mankind. Sin has made the brother a foe. Now it is against the "enemy" that revenge is directed. If man had no enemy, he would have no revenge; its fire would never be kindled within him. In heaven no such passion burns.

II. The GRATIFICATION of revenge. "Let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth." The fall, the ruin of the enemy,

is bliss to the revenging soul. Hence revenge is the genius that invents instruments of torture and implements of destruction—the inspiring and presiding fiend of all battles. The mangled frame of the enemy is to its eye a transporting vision; and its shrieks of agony fall as music on its ear. As a rule, the weaker the nature, the stronger the revenge. A man is great only as he rises above it. David wept and chastened his soul in his enemy's affliction (Psa. xxxv. 13, 14.) Job deprecated such a miserable passion. "If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or lifted up myself when evil found him," &c. (Job xxxi. 29); and—

"Exalted Socrates, divinely brave,
Injured he fell, and dying he forgave.
Too noble for revenge, which still we find
The weakest frailty of a feeble mind."
—Dryden.

But if unmanly, still more un-Christian. What said Christ? "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink," &c.

III. The AVENGER of revenge. "Lest the Lord see it, and it displeaseth Him, and he turn away His wrath from him." (1.) Man's revenge is displeasing to God. It is opposed to the benevolence of His nature; it is contrary to the teachings of His Word. (2.) Man's revenge may cause God to interpose, and relieve its victim. "He turn away his wrath from him." Coverdale renders the words thus, "Lest the Lord be angry, and turn His wrath from him to thee." Thus it was with the enemies of Samson (Judges xvi. 25-30.)

CONCLUSION. "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves,

but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head."

(No. CCXCIX.)

Subject: AN EXAMPLE OF THE FOLLY OF ENVY.

"Fret not thyself because of evil men, neither be thou envious at the wicked; for there shall be no reward to the evil man; the candle of the wicked shall be put out."—Prov. xxiv. 19, 20.

ENVY has been defined as "mortification or discontent excited by the sight of another's superiority or success, accompanied with some degree of hatred or malignity." Envy is a passion bad in itself. It always involves three things:—

First: *Conscious inferiority.*

Envy is always directed towards those possessions of another of which we feel ourselves destitute. We never envy those whom we feel in every respect inferior to ourselves. Envy is always, therefore, a compliment to its object. The envious man's language concerning its object, rightly interpreted, means this:—"You are superior to me."

"We ought," says Pliny, "to be guarded against every appearance of envy, as a passion that always implies inferiority wherever it resides." It always involves—

Secondly: *Malice towards the object.* It is, perhaps, ever associated with some amount of unkind feelings toward the man who possesses the enviable thing. It rejoices in the misfortunes and fall of the rival. Envy has been called, the

daughter of pride, the author of murder. It always involves—

Thirdly: *Pain.* It "*frets*." The prosperity of the rival is torturing. Solomon said that "envy was the rottenness of the bones;" and Socrates, "an envious man waxeth lean with the fatness of his neighbours;" and he calls envy a "poison that consumeth the flesh, and drieth up the marrow of the bones."

But the text gives us an example of the folly of envy: it is directed against the wicked. "Fret not thyself because of evil men, neither be thou envious at the wicked." Solomon's language is addressed to the righteous—he has in his eye the good, and to them he speaks. Now, this fiend crawls into the heart even of the just, and good men have in some time and in some degree been envious of the wicked, and the text suggests the folly of such a feeling. He means to say—

I. Don't be envious of the wicked; they will have no REWARD in the future; you will. "There shall be no reward to the evil man." All that the wicked have they have only for this life; their mansions, retinues, chariots, estates, are only for this life, they go out of the world as naked as they came, bearing only with them that corrupt character from which their hell will flame. Why envy the wicked these things which they hold only for a period so brief and uncertain as this life is? To-day they have them, to-morrow they leave them in the hands of others. If you are righteous,—obscure, poor, afflicted, as you are, there is a "reward" for you in the future. "Your light afflictions,

which are but for a moment, are working out for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Who is the better off? Surely the wicked demand your pity not your envy. He means to say—

II. They will have no PROSPERITY in the future; you will. "The candle of the wicked shall be put out." The "candle" is often used in the Bible to represent prosperity. All the prosperity of the wicked departs when they leave this world; the "candle" is out, and they sink into the black and blackening abysses of an awful future. "I give," said the infidel Hobbs, "my body to the dust, and my soul to the Great Perhaps. I

am going to take a leap in the dark." But your "candle" will begin to burn with an inextinguishable and ever-increasing luminousness, when you leave the world.

CONCLUSION. O ye godly men, who, in temporal matters, are sorely tried, whose path is rugged and thorny, whose heavens are cloudy, and whose atmosphere is bleak and boisterous, envy not the lot of the prosperous wicked around you. "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found."--Psalm xxxvii. 35, 36.

In Memoriam.

CANON MELVILL, B.D.

IN our last number we chronicled the departure from earth of two of the great teachers of this age: we have now to record the death of another, if not of equal fame as a Biblical teacher and theological writer, of far greater celebrity as a preacher.

The REV. HENRY MELVILL, Canon of St. Paul's, died early on Thursday morning, February 9th, at the Residentiary House in Amen Court, in his seventy-third year.

Henry Melvill was born on the 14th of September, 1798, at Pendennis Castle, Cornwall, of which his father, Captain Philip Melvill, of the 73rd Regiment, had been appointed Lieutenant-Governor, on returning from India, disabled by wounds received in the war with Hyder Ali. He proceeded in due course to St. John's College, Cambridge, which he entered as a "sizar" in October 1817. During his undergraduate course he stood at the head of the lists in his yearly college examinations, and in January 1821 took his Bachelor's

degree, being second Wrangler and first Smith's Prizeman. Immediately on taking his degree, Mr. Melvill was offered a Fellowship at Peterhouse, with the understanding that he was to take part in the tuition of the college. Having undertaken the tutorship, we find him acting as one of the Public Examiners, one of the Proctors of the University, Examiner in Hebrew, and a Select Preacher before the University, not very long after being ordained by the Bishop of Ely on his college title. In consequence of the high character and great popularity of his University sermons at St. Mary's, the Dean of Ely, who, as head of St John's College, had the chief part in the appointment, proposed to him to undertake the Hulsean Lectureship; but this he declined; and, after a stay of about ten years at Peterhouse, he vacated his Fellowship, by marriage, accepting at the same time, the incumbency of Camden Chapel, Camberwell.

This was in 1831. He had not long officiated here before the fame of his eloquence and talents spread far and wide, and attracted such congregations as to render it necessary to enlarge the building, which was thronged on Sundays, not only by the people of Camberwell, but by visitors from London.

The family of Mr. Melvill had long been connected with the late East India Company; and it is not at all suprising that the next appointment conferred on so accomplished a scholar as Henry Melvill should have been the Principalship of the East College at Haileybury, near Hertford, which he held until the dissolution of the college about ten years ago. In 1840 he was appointed, by the late Duke of Wellington, chaplain to the Tower of London, and incumbent of the church within its precincts. While holding this post he was elected to the Golden Lectureship in St. Margaret's Church, Lothbury, which he held until 1856, when he resigned it on being appointed to a canonry in St. Paul's Cathedral. In 1863 he was appointed by the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's to the rectory of Barnes, Surrey, which he resigned last year, to the great regret of his parishioners.

Canon Melvill was the author of a very large number of

miscellaneous single sermons, and of one or two volumes of *Sermons at Camberwell*; *Sermons Preached on Public Occasions*; *Cambridge University Sermons*; *Golden Lectures*; *Voices of the Year, being a Course of Readings for Sundays and Holydays*; *Hints on the Culture of Character*, &c. He also edited, for the Englishman's Library, a reprint of *Sherlock on Religious Assemblies*. He was, moreover, one of the Commissioners appointed in 1854 to examine into and report upon the best mode of admission by examination to writerships in the Indian Civil Service; and the Report drawn up and presented in the following year bears his signature, along with those of Lord Macaulay, &c.

Mr. Melvill, while he never gave in his adhesion to any of the rival parties in the Church, was considered while at Camberwell, and subsequently, as a moderate Evangelical, with somewhat High Church tendencies and sympathies. At all events, he was never identified with the school who look to Exeter Hall as their centre of inspiration. As an orator he was somewhat verbose and declamatory, but his good sense and refined taste always kept him from becoming turgid and bombastic. In early years he had a melodious voice and a somewhat handsome person and figure, both of which were decided helps to him as a pulpit orator; but, unlike most popular preachers, he was never deficient in sound and sensible matter; his reasoning was peculiarly lucid, and he was as happy in illustration as in the ordinary graces of style.

In our younger days we often heard this distinguished preacher. His majestic voice, his consummate elocution, his grand rhetoric, with all the devout fervour that rang through the voice and blazed in the eye, not only charmed our young nature, but often overwhelmed us with the most solemn impressions. The announcement of his name to preach in any church was to us, and to thousands more at that time, electric. We have stood with the breathless throng, drinking in his words, in some of the largest and most imposing ecclesiastical buildings in the metropolis. The last time we heard him, some five years ago, in St. Paul's, we were saddened by reflections on the devastating work of time. Years had turned

the raven hair into snow, and given a weakness and tremulousness to that voice which was once voluminous in melody and force.

Farewell, Henry Melvill! Our hearts bless thy memory. Peace to thy grave—everlasting progress to thy disembodied soul.

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

ST. PAUL: HIS LIFE, LABOURS, AND EPISTLES. By FELIX BUNGENER.
Translated from the French. London: The Religious Tract Society,
56 Paternoster Row.

"THE writings of Mr. Bungener have achieved a reputation far beyond the limits of his native Switzerland. His historical and theological works have been translated into many European languages, and numerous editions of some of them have appeared both in England and America. The treatise on St. Paul he regards as his most important contribution to religious literature, and he was especially anxious that it should be presented to English readers in an accurate version: for he complained that in his former works his meaning had often been obscured and sometimes misrepresented. The present translation has been made with his express sanction and approval." Though the treatises on the life and writings of St. Paul have become of late years very numerous, some of them characterized by great scholarship, some by deep spiritual insight, and some by homiletic suggestiveness, this volume is by no means a superfluity; it has a purpose, a method, and a style peculiar to itself. It is thoroughly Evangelical, in the Tract Society sense, and breathes a Catholic spirit.

SERMONS. By CHARLES WADSWORTH. London: R. Dickinson, 73 Farringdon Street.

THE MEASURE OF FAITH, AND OTHER SERMONS. By PHILIP COLBORNE. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 27 Paternoster Row.

MIS-READ PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE. Second Series. By J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

CHRIST'S HEALING TOUCH, AND OTHER SERMONS. By ALEXANDER MAC-KENNAL, B.A. London: Elliot Stock, 62 Paternoster Row.

HERE are four volumes of sermons. The first, viz., that by Charles Wadsworth, contains twenty discourses, the subjects of which are:—"God's Thoughts, The One Idea, Prejudice, Insincere Unbelief, The Gospel Call, Development and Discipline, Self-Knowledge, Christian Influence, Grace and Works, The Division of Spoil, Redemption, The Child Teacher, Communion, The Mortal Immortalized, A Spectacle to Angels, Thankfulness, The Feast of Harvest, The Young Man's Mission, The Mother's Sorrow, Progress in Decay." Though the author is evidently a man of vigorous intellect, fertile imagination, and religious earnestness, he is far too Calvinian in theology and rhapsodic in style to gain our unqualified approbation. He says, for instance:—"We glory in the iron theology of Calvin, because it was Christ's theology and Paul's, and because, indeed, it is the only philosophic stand-point between faith and blank atheism." This is, of course, mere assertion incapable of proof. Then there are too many ahs! and ohs! and interjectory cries for our taste. Despite all this, however, the sermons are of unusual merit. Every page overflows with vigorous thoughts, and beats with an earnest heart. There is a deep, strong stream of earnestness running through the whole, that bears the reader on from the opening sentences to the closing words.

The second volume, entitled "THE MEASURE OF FAITH," consists of nine discourses on the following themes:—The Measure of Faith, the Origin of Christian Life, God's Principle of Selection, Christian Heroism, the Awe of Redemption, Preaching Aided or Unaided by Christian Fellowship, Waiting and Watching, Christian Son, Christian Competence. The preface, tender and terse, by Dr. Stoughton, implies that in these sermons the author makes his first appearance in print. They are so creditable, both to his intellect and heart, that we trust he will be encouraged to appear often in the fields of sermonic literature, which, of all literature, should be the most interesting and inspiring.

The third, MIS-READ PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE, is a re-publication of certain discourses that appeared in the *Pulpit Analyst*. They are well written and adapted for usefulness.

The fourth, CHRIST'S HEALING TOUCH, contains twenty-one sermons. These discourses are pervaded by a deep, calm, independent thoughtfulness, which is truly refreshing. There is no straining after originality, no attempt at wordy grandeur. There are some able men whose sermons to us are not only unreadable, but distasteful on account of the manifest effort of the author to be grand; they confound us with their booming sentences. This volume is perfectly free from all this; the stream of thought is too deep to rattle or foam.

THE BIBLE STUDENT. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 27 Paternoster Row.

THIS is the yearly volume of a serial conducted for useful purposes.

It is full of information and suggestions intended and suited to help the Bible student. We are rather surprised to find that it contains Mr. Comper Gray's "BIBLE LORE," which appeared in a separate volume some months ago, and which we have already noticed in our pages. Would it not have been better to have kept the volume back until the edition of the serial had run out?

REFLECTED TRUTH. By REV. EDWARD GIRDLESTONE, M.A. London : William Mackintosh, 24 Paternoster Row.

RECOGNISING the truth of Mansel's statement in his *Limits of Religious Thought*, viz., that the Bible is not speculative, but regulative, the venerable author of this little work here holds up the example of Christ as the great regulative force of man's life. Christ is here exhibited in all the various aspects of His wonderful life; and no one can read these passages without the impression on his heart that Christ is chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. This little work should be circulated by thousands; it is worth volumes of systematic theology; it gives us the "truth as it is seen in Jesus."

THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, OR AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THIS SOCIETY. By GODFREY HOLDEN PIKE. With an introduction by Rev. C. H. SPURGEON. London: Passmore and Alabaster, 18 Paternoster Row.

THIS work will have a charm to the thousands who are interested in the indefatigable and influential labours of the renowned minister of the "Metropolitan Tabernacle."

A LETTER TO REV. SAMUEL DAVIDSON, D.D., IN ANSWER TO HIS ESSAY AGAINST THE JOHANNINE AUTHORSHIP OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL. By KENTISH BACHE. London: Bowyer Kilts, 5 Beresford Place, Without.

THOUGH we have not the honour of a personal acquaintance with Dr. Samuel Davidson, we have studied some of his works, and learnt to love him as a most Catholic-hearted Christian, and reverence him as one of our ablest Biblical scholars of the age. We have not, as yet, had the opportunity of reading his essay in the *Theological Review*, and therefore we are unable to judge as to the value of his arguments on the Johannine authorship of the Fourth Gospel. The author of this pamphlet controverts the Doctor's arguments, and there seems to us much force in his reasonings, though not the best tone in his temper. The argument of a theological controversialist loses much of its power when conducted by one who cannot treat his adversary with magnanimity and respect. Though we cannot, for reasons already indicated, pronounce judgment upon the merits of this controversy, we sincerely think that all who have read Dr. Davidson's essay should read this very able and scholarly pamphlet.



A HOMILY

ON

The Theology of Charles Dickens.

“Is Saul also among the prophets?”—1 Sam. x. 12.

IT is not my purpose to give a biographic sketch of Charles Dickens, the richly gifted and world-renowned novelist, who has so recently departed from our midst. There is not sufficient special interest in his outward life to call for this. It does not seem to have been marked by any striking incidents or startling adventures.

Whilst his imagination created men whose histories and exploits were most stirring to the sympathies, his own career was not of this description; it was somewhat tame and uneventful. The path he trod was as level and straight as that of most men. He had to scale no terrible heights, nor to encounter savage monsters on his way. The weather of his life was not very variable, it was generally fair, seldom foul, never rising to hurricanes or tornadoes. Moreover, the facts of his life are too well known to require their registration here. So long did he move before the eye of the public, so many were the chroniclers of his every step, and so constantly was he revealing himself by the matchless productions of his prolific pen, that few men

have ever appeared who became better and wider known to their contemporaries than he. His name is a household word in all the reading circles of the two hemispheres.

Nor is it my purpose even to enumerate his literary works, still less to criticise them, pronounce a judgment on their merits, inquire into their tendency, or speculate on their influence. Though I have read several of his leading productions, including that which he himself esteemed his favourite, I presume not to take the critic's chair, and pronounce either upon the qualities or works of such a mind. If I cannot go with those who rank him amongst the most transcendent geniuses in the hierarchy of English literature, if I feel that his elaborate treatment of the infinitesimal details of human life is sometimes intolerably irksome, and that some of his leading characters are despicable, and others far too exaggerated to be representative, I, nevertheless, yield to none in my admiration of his genius and my appreciation of him as a popular teacher of mankind. No sympathy whatever have I with those of my brethren in the ministry who hold him up before their congregations as a writer whose teachings are unsound, and whose influence is pernicious. Nor do I admire him the less because he has satirized canting preachers, bloated ecclesiastics, and hypocritical religionists. I share his hatred of these abominations, and laud him for all the withering shafts of irony he has directed against the hollowness, the mawkishness, and the intolerance that often characterize and curse the so-called "Christian World."

I propose to call your attention to his *theology*. Some may exclaim, "Theology! he had no theology; he was a free-thinker, a secularist, he ignored all questions but those that bore on man's terrestrial interests." Others, perhaps, will say, "If he had a theology it was of a most unsound and heterodox character, he was anything but a *Christian Theist*." Now, my position is, that he not only

had a theology, but his theology was *thoroughly Evangelical*. It is, indeed, likely that he would not call himself Evangelical, for the holy word has got into bad repute in these days. A class of men have assumed it as their distinctive title, whose exclusive spirit, narrow opinions, and intolerant conduct have given it an odour offensive in the nostrils of honest thinkers of every school of religious polity and doctrine. In a conventional sense Charles Dickens was no Evangelical; he hated, he satirized, the popular thing. But, in the New Testament sense, I shall prove from his own words that he was soundly Evangelical in doctrine. His words as evidence I take, not from his ordinary writings, but from his "last will and testament"—words which he wrote at a time when the soul is generally in one of its most solemn moods, when there is a shadow on the world, when death is before the eye, and when eternity seems parting its awful folds. Here are his words:—

"I COMMIT MY SOUL TO THE MERCY OF GOD, THROUGH OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, AND I EXHORT MY DEAR CHILDREN HUMBLY TO TRY TO GUIDE THEMSELVES BY THE TEACHING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT IN ITS EXPRESSED SPIRIT, AND TO PUT NO FAITH IN ANY MAN'S NEW CONSTRUCTION OF ITS LETTER HERE OR THERE."*

* A letter which Charles Dickens wrote from Gadshill Place (the *fac-simile* of which is before me), dated June 1870, is in perfect conformity with these words. In answer to a letter which Mr. John Matcham addressed to him concerning language in the *Mystery of Edwin Drood*, which he considered derogatory to Christianity, Mr. Dickens says:—

"It would be quite inconceivable to me—but for your letter—that any reasonable reader could possibly attach Scriptural reference to a passage in a book of mine, reproducing a much abused social figure of speech impressed into all sorts of service, on all sorts of inappropriate occasions, without the faintest connexion of it with its original source. I am truly shocked to find that any reader can make the mistake.

"I have always striven in my writings to express veneration for the life and lessons of our Saviour, because I feel it, and because I re-wrote that history for my children, every one of whom knew it from having it

This last will and testament of his plainly indicates the doctrines which he held concerning human nature, concerning God, concerning Jesus Christ, and concerning the Gospel revelation.

First: We learn from this, that his doctrine concerning HUMAN NATURE is Evangelical. This language implies that he held two beliefs concerning his own nature and condition. (1.) That he had a soul that would survive the dissolution of his body—"I commit my soul," he says. He was not one of those writers who regard their existence as nothing more than organized dust, and resolve all the phenomena of thought, feeling, passion, volition, &c., into modifications of matter. He believed that there was a soul within him, of which the body was the mere residence, organ and servant. He believed that that soul had a power of living apart from the body, and would survive its dissolution. He did not regard this life as the only and entire sphere of human existence—the final as well as the first—where we are kindled into life, blaze on for a short time, and then go out in eternal night. No: he had a far grander idea of human nature than this. To him this life was only the daybreak,—the noon was yonder; the seed-time,—the harvest was to be reaped in other climes. His language implies—(2.) That he regarded his own moral condition as requiring Divine mercy. "I commit my soul to the *mercy* of God," he says. Had he believed that he was a mere creature of circumstances, that his conduct was the result of eternal necessity, he would not have sought mercy of his Maker; or had he regarded himself as one whose life had been in perfect conformity to the Divine will, he would not have required *mercy*,—justice from his

repeated to them long before they could read, and almost as soon as they could speak.

"But I have never made proclamation of this from the house-tops."

Maker would have been enough to consummate his bliss: or had he been a self-righteous Pharisee—one of a “generation that are pure in their own eyes”—he would have stood before his Maker proudly exulting in his virtues, rather than looking to Him as a culprit suing for his clemency.

Now are not these views, which his language unmistakeably shows he held, concerning human nature, in exact agreement with the teachings of the New Testament? Did not Christ everywhere teach that man had a soul that would live after the body had fallen back to its original elements? What else did He mean in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus? What else meant He when, on the cross, He promised the penitent thief that on that very day he should be with Him in Paradise? Did He not also teach that man was a *sinner*, and required *mercy*? that his attitude before his Maker should be that of the publican in the temple, who prayed, “Lord, be merciful to me a sinner”?

The teachings of the Apostles concerning human nature, are they not exactly the same? Do they not speak of the body as the dwelling, and the soul as the resident; the body as the costume to be laid aside at death, the soul as the wearer, to “be clothed upon” in a world beyond this; and do they not, moreover, in every chapter, and almost in every verse, speak of man as a sinner, and depending entirely for his well-being on the mercy of God?

Secondly: We learn from the words that his doctrine concerning God is Evangelical. “I commit my soul to the mercy of *God*.” These words imply that he believed in the *personal* existence of God. He did not belong to that class of literary men who see nothing in the universe greater than nature, nothing outside the visible, nothing beside the material. He was no *Atheist*, nor *Pantheist*

either, confounding God with His universe. He ranked not with that class of authors who sometimes write of God as if he were the soil of which the countless objects of the universe were mere plants, growing out of it and mouldering back to it again; or as if He were a great ocean, of which all the objects in creation were mere waves, rising out of it, and anon breaking back into its boundless abyss. He refers to God as a *personal* existence, as a being as distinct from all nature as a builder from his buildings, as an author from his works. His language also implies that he believed in the *merciful* character of God. "I commit my soul to the *mercy* of God." His God was not a being of mere absolute power, nor of icy intellect infinite in knowledge, enthroned in His universe, indifferent alike to the groans and jubilations, the virtues and vices of His creatures. He was a being of sensibility, and His feeling was not that of malevolence but of love; he believed in His mercy. He believed that God would in mercy take care of *his* soul. Great as he felt the great God to be, he did not feel that He was too great to notice him. He believed both in the capacity and disposition of the Great One to take charge of his imperishable spirit.

Is not this view of God also in perfect keeping with the Evangelical doctrine? Did not Christ and His Apostles teach the existence of a personal Deity, full of mercy, who would take care of souls? Did not Christ practically exhibit the same faith in His dying hour, when He said, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit"? And what said Paul?—"For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe."

Thirdly: We learn from this that his doctrine concerning JESUS CHRIST is Evangelical. "Through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." He believed in Jesus Christ; he

was no Deist. He believed in the mediation of Christ, and looked for the mercy of God which he needed, through that mediation. The Divine mercy he looked for was something more than that general goodness which he saw everywhere about him in nature: he looked for the mercy of God of which Jesus Christ was the Revealer and the Channel; a mercy for sinners depraved and condemned. He calls Christ "SAVIOUR." He felt conscious of moral imperfections, and he wanted mercy to correct his moral mistakes, to cleanse away his moral impurities, to renovate his moral nature. He saw no mercy in nature that could do this. Nature had no pity, no commiseration; her hills, her heavens, her oceans and rivers remained dead as stone to all the groans of the world's suffering. He expected no mercy through nature, but through Christ. He felt himself a sinner, condemned by his conscience, and by the moral laws of the universe; he wanted his sins blotted out, his debts cancelled, his conscience cleared of its guilt, and this was the work of mercy, and where could he see mercy for such a work as this? There was nothing forgiving in nature, nature is inexorable; she never pardons the violation of her laws; she holds inflexibly to the law, that the soul that sinneth shall die. He looked for it through "our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;" these are his words.

Is not this view of Christ Evangelical? Is not the Gospel full of the doctrine that the mercy we require to redeem us to health, purity, and blessedness must come through Jesus Christ? "Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name," says Christ, "it shall be given you." "These things are written," says John, "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name." "Therefore," says Paul, "being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Are we to obtain eternal life? it must be through Christ. Are we to be quickened from death

into life? it must be through Christ. Are we to pray? we must address the Eternal Father in the name of Christ. Are we to praise Him? we must offer our thanksgiving to Heaven in the name of Christ. As our sun is the organ through which God lights, heats, quickens, and beautifies this earth, so Christ is the Medium through which He communicates all saving mercy to fallen men.

Fourthly: We learn from his words that his doctrine concerning the GOSPEL was Evangelical. "I exhort my dear children humbly to try to guide themselves by the teaching of the New Testament in its expressed spirit, and to put no faith in any man's new construction of its letter, here or there." From this it is clear that he regarded the New Testament as the *heavenly* guide, that it was indeed the Word of God and not the word of man—as the *all-sufficient* guide, he did not regard anything else as absolutely necessary—the comments of expositors, or the ceremonies of priests; and as the *only* guide; he points his children to no other guide—not to any of his own literary productions; or to the most illustrious authors, either ancient or modern. No mention is made of Shakespeare or Schiller, of Goethe, of Milton, or of Burns. The New Testament was everything; before its light the most brilliant productions of human genius paled away. The New Testament—this was the true map of the path through which he desired them to walk, the chart by which they were to guide their vessels over the treacherous sea of life. This gifted genius, this illustrious author, placed more importance upon the utterances of the humble Galilean, the fishermen of Galilee, and the tent-maker of Tarsus, than upon any or all the choicest works in the choicest libraries of the world.

Here, again, is he not Evangelical? Is not this Word of God everywhere in the Gospel represented as the heavenly,

the all-sufficient, the only guide of souls, the only infallible physician that appears in the moral hospital of the world? All others are mere empirics, their prescriptions are quackery; the only true light in the moral firmament of the world; all other lights are passing meteors, or at best, little planets, shedding their borrowed, feeble, and freezing beams. So strong was Paul on this point that he said, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

CONCLUSION: I think I have made my position good: that Charles Dickens' theology was Evangelical. I know that there is a growing tendency in pseudo-philosophers, popular writers, and the would-be intellectual in all circles, to sneer at Evangelical truth, and to associate its disciples with the feeble in mind, the meagre in intelligence, the mawkish in sentiment, and the unmanly in character. What reason have they for this? Have they drawn their opinions from a candid and devout study of Jesus and His doctrines; or judge they from the conduct of conventional Evangelicals? If the latter, their conduct is most unphilosophical and unjust. They must pull the beam out of their own eye before they can see the mote in their brothers'.

I would say to such men—Charles Dickens was an Evangelical believer. You regard him, I know, as a man of transcendent genius, you place him high in the realm of letters; are you not bound, then, to respect, on *intellectual grounds*, doctrines which that great literary chief of yours accepted, and whose shoe-latchets you confess yourself unworthy to unloose? Would your literary paragon accept absurdities? Would he, with eternity opening on him, acknowledge as realities the fables of fiction, or the inventions of impostors? If it was grand enough for the

intellect of Charles Dickens, it behoves you to cease your supercilious sneerings, and to look a little into its merits.

You say that the writings of Charles Dickens are pure in their character, and beneficent in their influence; that his sympathies with man as man were broad, and deep, and strong; that his heart flamed ever with indignation at the shams, the unrealities, and the heartlessnesses of the affluent and fashionable, and yearned evermore with tender compassion for the poor, the down-trodden and distressed in all circles and lands; that the tendency of all his writings was to enthrone virtue and crush vice, to unite the rich and the poor together in the golden cords of mutual sympathy and love, and to raise society to the loftiest ideals of manhood. Granted all: but then, surely the doctrines he accepted demand your attention on *moral* grounds. Would this pure and loving writer of yours accept doctrines that tended to immorality, to social disorder, and to human intolerance and suffering? Nay, are you sure that it was not Evangelical truth that made him the pure writer and the tender philanthropist that you say he was? May not the purity, the beneficence, and the love that you aver roll as a river through all his writings, turn out to be only streams outflowing from the fountains of Evangelical truth?

Do you think, on the whole, then, that you can find a better religion than that which Charles Dickens accepted? Have you a keener intellect—can you see deeper into the meaning of things? Have you a stronger imagination—can you wing yourself into higher regions of speculation? Have you a clearer spiritual sense—are you more competent than he to discern moral distinctions? Have you a genius more inventive—can you construct methods for human advancement better than he could? If not, and he—your great literary master and idol—with all his

acknowledged superiority of intellect, genius, love, and justice, told his children, with death before him, to "guide themselves by the teaching of the New Testament," it may certainly be worth your while to ask yourself the question whether you can do better than he did—"commit yourself to the MERCY OF GOD, THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST;" and commend your children, if you have any, "TO GUIDE THEMSELVES BY THE TEACHING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT IN ITS EXPRESSED SPIRIT, AND PUT NO FAITH IN ANY MAN'S NEW CONSTRUCTION OF ITS LETTER HERE OR THERE."



Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

OUR PURPOSE.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this *TEHILLIM*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough *homiletic* treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

OUR METHOD.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1.) The history of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words, is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) Annotations of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The argument of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The *homiletics* of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonizing methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

Subject: A SUPPLICATION METAPHORICALLY EXPRESSED.

"Unto Thee will I cry, O Lord
My rock; be not silent to me:
Lest, if Thou be silent to me,
I become like them that go down into the pit.

Hear the voice of my supplications when I cry unto Thee,
When I lift up my hands toward Thy holy oracle."

Ps. xxviii. 1, 2.

HISTORY.—This Psalm is called "A Psalm of David," and we know of no just reason for denying to him its authorship. The historical circumstances which called it forth cannot be ascertained with absolute certainty. Its contents will apply to David during the period of Absalom's rebellion, but better, we think, to him in connexion with the murder of Abner. "The whole strain of it," says a modern expositor, "as well as a number of epithets and expressions in it, eminently accord with this supposition. David would, most probably, compose a Psalm on such an occasion, and if he did, none has so strong a claim as this Psalm to be considered the one he penned. The very strongest feelings of his nature were roused. He was filled with indignation at the perpetrators of the deed, with horror at their crime, with grief for their princely victim, with apprehensions of the consequences to his kingdom of such high-handed wickedness, and with a sense of his own inability to chastise it condignly. So affected was he with this act of villainy, that he kept it in remembrance to his dying day, and with his dying breath charged his son, Solomon, to avenge it. (1 Kings ii. 5). We may, therefore, very certainly conclude that this was the occasion on which the Psalm was composed."

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver. 1.*—"Unto Thee will I cry, O Lord my rock." The expression "my rock" points to the unchangeableness of God as an object of trust. It was one of David's favourite metaphors. (See Psalm xxviii. 1, xxxi. 2, xlii. 9). "*Be not silent to me.*" Margin "from me." The allusion is to one who will not speak to us, who stands aloof in mute indifference. David would not have the Almighty to be thus distant and silent. "*Lest if Thou be silent to me*"—i.e., "if Thou dost not answer my supplications"—"*I become like them that go down into the pit.*" The word "pit" here refers to the grave. (See Isaiah xiv. 15, 19). "Going down into the pit" is a common description of death.—Psalm xxx. 3, lxxxviii. 4, exliii. 7. "The meaning is, that if he did not obtain help from God, he despaired of life. His troubles would overwhelm and crush him. He could not bear up under them."

Ver. 2.—"Hear the voice of my supplications when I cry unto Thee, when I lift up my hands towards Thy holy oracle." "Thy holy oracle" in the margin is "the oracle of the sanctuary." "Thy holy oracle" is a striking name given to the sanctuary of God. Just as the heathen used to go to some famous temple to consult the oracle, so the sanctuary of the living God was not only the place for worship, but for asking oracular counsel. The priest, with the Urim and Thummim, returned the Divine response, just as the priest or priestess of Jupiter or Apollo delivered the responses of these divinities. David himself often "inquired of the Lord" in this manner (1 Sam. xxii. 10, xxiii. 2;

2 Sam. v. 19, 23); and of Ahithophel's counsel it was said that it was "as if a man had inquired at the oracle of God." (2 Sam. xvi. 23).

ARGUMENT.—"The Psalmist first sends forth the petition that he may be heard in his prayer, remarking that unless this be done he is given over to irremediable destruction. This forms the introduction (ver. 1). After repeating this petition at the beginning of the first division he unfolds his request—viz., that God would not entangle *him* in that irremediable destruction which is the portion of the *wicked*, and would inflict upon these, particularly his enemies, the punishment which they deserve (ver. 2-5.) He obtains assurance of being heard, and praises the Lord as the Saviour of his anointed, and of his people (ver. 6-8.) The conclusion (ver. 9) contains the prayer that the Lord would reveal Himself in all future time as He had done on the present occasion, as the Saviour of His people."—*Hengstenberg*.

HOMILETICS.—Homiletically this Psalm points to six distinct topics—(1.) A supplication metaphorically expressed; (2.) A society strongly deprecated; (3.) An imprecation that cannot be unjustified; (4.) A prediction very terrible; (5.) A thanksgiving truly inspiring; (6.) An intercession sublimely catholic.

These first two verses give us A SUPPLICATION METAPHORICALLY EXPRESSED.—They are full of metaphor, and this fact shows that the suppliant's soul was in a high state of excitement. When the human mind gets charged with a strong and stirring emotion it cannot express itself in the common prose of everyday life, it leaps into poetry, and speaks in boldest figures; vocables are no longer its vehicles, but through objects gathered from nature and from life it pours forth its overflowing heart.

I. The OBJECT of prayer is here given in metaphor:—

First: His *nature* is given in metaphor. Jehovah is called the "Rock." What on earth is so immutable, so abiding as the Rock? It stands unmoved amidst the approaching and receding billows of a thousand ages. Whilst the fleets of nations heave under its shadows century after century, and disappear, it stands as earth's best symbol of the permanent and immutable. Why does the excited suppliant here turn to Jehovah as a Rock? Three good

reasons may be given :—(1.) Natural craving. Deep in the nature of every man is the desire for some object on which to settle its confidence and its love. The soul is a planet made for a fixed centre, and never can it be at ease until it finds it. (2.) Inward necessity. The human spirit, without a fixed centre, is like the sea—never at rest; its faculties and passions battle as billow battles with billow. The Immutable God can alone harmonize and centralize them. (3.) External mutation. All outside the soul is unsettled and shifting as the clouds. “Riches take to themselves wings and flee away;” friends drop into the grave. The soul wants a Rock amidst this surging sea.

Secondly: His *attitude* is given in metaphor. “Be not silent to me.” The Eternal is here represented as standing aloof in mute indifference. It seems natural for the soul in deep sorrow to regard the Almighty as distant and silent. Even the Holy One on the cross exclaimed, “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” Does not this prove man’s intuitive and ineradicable belief in the fact that fellowship with the Great Father is happiness? Aye, aye, whatever may be man’s theoretical credenda concerning the Eternal, his primitive and natal faith is, that happiness is attained only by close communion with Him. Oh! that men would act on this pristine faith and draw near to the Fountain of all good.

Thirdly: His *salvation* is given in metaphor. Deliverance from the pit. “Lest I be like them who go down into the pit.” From what a pit does the great God deliver His people—(1.) From the pit of *uncorrectable* depravity. The finally impenitent sinner sinks into the abysses of wickedness and passes beyond all restoration. (2.) The pit of *unpardonable* guilt. The clouds of guilt become so black and dense around the finally impenitent, that the rays of forgiving mercy refuse at last to break through them. (3.) The pit of *unrelievable* despair. The finally impenitent sinner sinks into hopelessness. God’s salvation is a deliverance from this *pit*. Every sin committed is a sinking deeper and deeper down.

II. The NATURE of the prayer is here given in metaphor. "When I lift my hands towards Thy holy oracle." This metaphor teaches—

First: That prayer has respect to a *special* manifestation of God. "I lift up my hands toward Thy holy oracle." The reference is undoubtedly to the Mercy-Seat in the inner sanctuary where God manifested Himself to His people and answered their prayer. This was the appointed place for meeting with Jehovah. Hence we read, "And when Moses was gone into the tabernacle of the congregation to speak with Him, then he heard the voice of One speaking with him from off the mercy-seat, that was upon the ark of testimony." For ages the pious Hebrew turned his face in prayer towards this spot as the place where God was *specially* manifest. We find Daniel, a captive in Babylon, doing so. What the "Mercy-Seat" was to the Jew, Christ is to humanity in these last times. He is the Temple in which God is to be met, and where the Shekinah radiates. He is Emmanuel—God with us. Man in prayer requires that his Deity should appear as a *local* personality. This metaphor teaches—

Secondly: That prayer is the *elevation* of the soul to God. "I lift up my hands." The lifting up of the hands symbolizes the lifting up of the heart. True prayer is the soul looking up in conscious dependence upon God; looking up as the hungry babe to its mother for nourishment, as the suffering patient to the physician for relief, as the wayfarer in a strange land to his guide for direction. *The essence of prayer is conscious dependence upon God.*



THE TRUE ROCK OF LIFE.

"For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges."—Deut. xxxii. 31.

From the words we infer:—I. THAT A MAN'S GOD IS THE ROCK OF HIS BEING. First: *Because He is the most settled object to him.* Secondly: *Because it is the Object most relied upon by him.* II. THAT THE GOD OF THE BIBLE IS THE BEST ROCK OF SOULS. First: He is the *grandest* Rock. Secondly: He is the *most durable* of rocks. Thirdly: He is the *most accessible* of rocks. III. THE SUPERIORITY OF THIS ROCK IS WELL ATTESTED. First: It is attested by those who *have* tried it. Secondly: It is attested by those who *reject* it.

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Job.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of great scholarly and critical worth; such as Drs. Barnes, Wemyss, Mason Goode, Noyes Lee, and Herman Hedwick Bernard: the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering: but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in an order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.

Subject: SATAN AS A SERVANT OF THE INFINITE, MALEVOLENTLY DEALING WITH JOB'S PERSONALITY.

“And Satan answered the Lord, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life. So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes. Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die. But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.”—Job ii. 4-10.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS. As the first three verses of this chapter are almost identical in phrase as well as meaning with the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses of the first chapter, the same exegetical remarks will apply, and we need not quote them here. (See page 70.)

Ver. 4.—“And Satan answered the Lord, and said, Skin for skin.” Dr. Bernard renders this “Limb for limb.” We see no sufficient reason for such a reading. “Skin for skin” is true to the original. “This seems a proverbial expression, of which various explanations have been given. The best seems to be that which refers its origin to the time when trade was conducted by barter or exchange of commodities, and when the skins of animals, being a most frequent and valuable commodity, were used in some sort to represent property, as they still are in many parts

of the world. Tributes, ransoms, &c., also used often to be paid in skins."—Dr. Kitto. "Yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life." In plain English this means, sovereign after sovereign, all the sovereigns that a man has will he give in exchange for his life. The idea is, that life is dearer to a man than his property, however great his property may be.

Ver. 5.—"*But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.*" "Bone and flesh" represent his corporeal life. The hand of destruction had bereft Job of all his property—his "skins"—as well as of his children, and thus far his piety had stood the test. But life is dearer than property; let that be touched and the piety will give place to blasphemy. This was Satan's idea.

Ver. 6.—"*And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.*" Here permission is granted Satan again to afflict Job, but that permission has its limitation—"but save his life." Torture him to the utmost; let every nerve quiver in burning anguish, but spare his life. Take every thing from him but sheer existence.

Ver. 7.—"*So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.*" "Sore boils." As it is in the Hebrew in the singular, a "burning sore" would perhaps be a better rendering. "Job was covered with one universal inflammation." Dr. Mason Goode renders the words, "with burning ulcerations." "The disease of Job," says a modern expositor, "seems to have been an universal ulcer, producing an eruption over his entire person, and attended with violent pain and constant restlessness. A universal bile or group of biles over the body would accord with the account of the disease in the various parts of the book. In the Elephantiasis the skin is covered with incrustations like those of an elephant. It is a chronic and contagious disease, marked by a thickening of the legs, with a loss of hair and feeling, a swelling of the face, and a hoarse, nasal voice. It affects the whole body: the bones as well as the skin are covered with spots, and tumours, at first red, but afterwards black."

Ver. 8.—"*And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes.*" "Potsherd, not a piece of a broken earthen vessel, but an instrument made for scratching (the root of the Hebrew word is scratch). The sore was too disgusting to touch. To sit in the ashes marks the deepest mourning (Jon. iii. 6); also humility, as if the mourner were nothing but dust and ashes, so Abraham (Gen. xviii. 27.)"

Ver. 9.—"*Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God and die.*" The expression, "Curse God and die," is translated by Dr. Lee, "bless the gods and die;" by Wemyss, "bless God and die;" by Dr. Bernard, "blaspheme God and die;" by others, "renounce God and die." If it means "bless," she is probably ironic, and means to say, "You have been blessing God, go on blessing Him, and all you will get for it is dying." But curse God is most probably the correct rendering, and accepted by most expositors. [See remarks on the woman's language in Dr. Kitto's Pictorial Bible.]

Ver. 10.—“*But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh.*” The word “foolish” is here used in the sense of wicked; and the idea is that the sentiment she uttered was impious, and such as were on the lips of the wicked. “*What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.*” “In all this”—in all his physical tortures, in his wife’s taunts, and all his grievous calamities Job “sinned not with his lips.” So far Satan was unsuccessful still.

HOMILETICS.—In our previous homiletic sketch of this book we had under consideration the dealing of Satan with Job’s *circumstances*, depriving him of all his property, bereaving him of his children, and leaving him destitute and disconsolate; here we find him dealing with his *personality*, afflicting him with sufferings of inexpressible anguish. From the words we learn Satan’s low estimate of human nature, his great power over human nature, and his grand purpose with human nature.

I. Satan’s LOW ESTIMATE of Human Nature.—His language here clearly implies that even a good man’s love of goodness is not supreme and invincible. He states—

First: *That goodness is not so dear to him as life.* “Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath, will he give for his life.” Self-preservation is a strong instinct in human nature, and therefore a Divine principle; but it is not true that it is ever the strongest feeling in the human heart. A man who has come under the dominion of love for the true, the beautiful, and the good, holds his life as subordinate to the high principles of genuine religion and godly morality. This is a fact which the history of martyrdom places beyond debate. From the Hebrew youths in Babylon, and the martyrdom of Stephen, down to the present period, unnumbered instances have occurred in demonstration of this. Thousands of men in Christendom to-day can say with Paul, “I count not my life dear unto me,” &c. It is true that to unregenerate man life is everything, and they will give “skin for skin, yea, all that they have” for it; but it is a libel on human nature, both in its normal and redeemed condition, to say that love of life is its supreme law. He states—

Secondly: *That great personal suffering will turn even a good man against God.* "Put forth thine hand and touch his bone," &c. Such is the connexion of the body with the soul, that great bodily suffering has undoubtedly a tendency to generate a faithless, murmuring, and rebellious spirit. Affliction is not the soil in which the principles of virtue naturally spring up and grow. The sufferings of hell cannot discipline one wicked spirit into holiness. Granting all this, however, it is a fact that genuine godliness can not only stand against the severest bodily sufferings, but even gets strength and development from them. Men under all ages have said, "We glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh," &c. Satan has, therefore, a very low estimate of human nature, and the text records one of his foul libels against it.

II. Satan's GREAT POWER over Human Nature.—"And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold he is in thine hand; but save his life." We infer from the words—

First: That his great power *moves within fixed limits.* "Behold, he is in thine hand, but save his life." Independently he has no power, he derives his energy from the Almighty, he is in the hands of Omnipotence. Great as he is, in the great God he lives and moves and has his being. He cannot move a faculty or think a thought without power derived from the Creator of his being. "Save his life." Satan cannot destroy us unless God permits him. We infer from the words—

Secondly: That his great power *is used to torture the body and corrupt the soul.* See how he afflicts Job's body. "So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils." The ancients ascribed many physical diseases direct to the devil. Perhaps they were not far wrong in their philosophy. Physical evils spring from moral, and the devil is the instigator of the morally bad. What a merciless torturer he is; how soon he makes poor Job writhe in agony. He covered him with ulcers from "the sole of his foot to his crown," so that "he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal: and he sat down among the ashes." See, too, how he

corrupts Job's wife. "Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God and die." If you substitute the word "bless" for "curse," you still have the impious spirit of the wife: then in heartless irony she counsels her husband to blaspheme his God. Perhaps she meant, "Thou hast been blessing God under thine affliction thus far, go on with thy cant, and die, for death would be desirable both to thyself and me." Satan acted thus not only on *Job's body*, but on the *soul of Job's wife*, and both in order to tempt the patriarch to sin against his Maker.

III. Satan's GRAND PURPOSE with Human Nature.—What was his master-purpose? To turn Job against God. And is not this his grand purpose with all men? Setting them against their Maker is the great work of his heart.

There is one thought about his purpose, however, suggested by the text, encouraging to us, it is *frustratable*. Up to the present point he failed with Job.

Three things are worthy of attention here concerning Job in *frustrating* the purpose of Satan:

First: He *reproves his wife*. "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh."

Secondly: He *vindicates God*. "What? shall we receive good at the hands of God, and shall we not receive evil?"

Thirdly: He *is commended by inspiration*. Here is the Divine testimony to Job's state of mind amid the torturing of the devil. "In all this did not Job sin with his lips." ⁶ It is true that after this we find the patriarch falling into a murmuring and rebellious spirit, but *up to this point* he has frustrated the purpose of the evil one.



SUBTLETY OF SATAN.—An enemy, before he besiegeth a city, surroundeth it at a distance to see where the wall is the weakest, best to be battered, lowest, easiest to be scaled, ditch narrowest to be bridged, shallowest to be waded over; what place, if not regularly fortified, where he may approach with least danger, and assault with most advantage. So Satan walketh about surveying all the powers of our souls, where he may most probably lay his temptations—as whether our understandings are easier corrupted with error, or our fancies with levity, or our wills with frowardness, or our affections with excess.—*Spencer*.

Sermonic Glances at the Gospel of St. John.

As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form, of Sermonic outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengskenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dorner; &c., &c.

Subject: CHRIST THE PRE-EMINENT AND ILLUMINATING LIFE.

"In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light. That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."—John i. 4-9.

FROM this passage we learn two things concerning Christ's LIFE:—

I. His life was PRE-EMINENT. "In Him was life." The language seems emphatic. Is there not life in all living creatures? Why, then, should the writer single out Christ and say—"In *Him* was life"? He means that in Christ was life in a pre-eminent sense.

First: "In Him was life" without *beginning*. Life in all other existences had a commencement. In Him it had no origin, it was an eternal thing.

Secondly: "In Him was life" without *dependence*. Life in all other living things is conditional; its support rests on things outside of itself. Not so with the life in Him, it was before the universe. Were the universe to be no more, the life in Him would continue unabated in plenitude and power.

Thirdly: "In Him was life" without *limitation*. All other life has its limits, not so with His. His is without limit—(1.) As to *kind*. In His life were the germs and archetypes of all other life, material and spiritual. (2.) As to *amount*.

All other life is circumscribed: in the highest creature it is scarcely more than a spark, but in Him it was as an ocean without a bottom or a shore. (3.) As to *communicativeness*. His life was the great fontal source of all life; He is the fountain of all life—a fountain ever out-pouring, and eternally inexhaustible. (4.) As to *duration*. His life will never have a termination. “He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.”

II. His life was ILLUMINATING. “And the life was the LIGHT of men.” Christ’s life, whatever its variety and fullness, had all a *moral character*, for He was a moral Being. It was under the control of moral principles, and directed for moral ends. Hence His *character* in the New Testament is called “life.” In this Gospel the word ζωή—life—occurs more than thirty times, and always in a spiritual sense. There are several things taught here concerning His life as *light*:

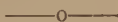
First: That this life was “*the light of men*.” There are some lives that are not only like bodies opaque in themselves, but bodies incapable of reflecting light. Christ’s life was the fountain of moral light. It is to all intelligent beings in the universe what our sun is to our system. Two things are here suggested in relation to this light to man—(1.) Man *needed* it. “The light shineth in darkness.” Humanity was in moral darkness: the darkness of depravity, guilt, and suffering. When Christ came into the world He came as a sun rising on man’s dark heavens. The world never had such a light before. Again, it is suggested—(2.) Man *rejected* it. “The darkness comprehended it not”—οὐ κατέλαβεν—did not take it in. Man can shut out the material light of noontide from his house by darkening his windows, or even by closing his eyes, so men shut out this moral light, closed their eyes against it. Men were “sitting in darkness and the shadow of death” while the light was shining above and around, they “comprehended it not.” It is here stated again:

Secondly: That this light was *heralded by the Baptist*. “There was a man sent by God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness to bear witness of the Light, that all

men through Him might believe." According to prophecy (Mal. iii. 1, Isa. xl. 3) John came as the forerunner of the Messiah, came as the morning star to announce the rising Sun. He pointed to the true Light. "Behold the Lamb of God." It is here stated :

Thirdly : That this light *becomes available by faith*. "That all men through Him might believe." How is this light to enter into the individual soul, scatter its clouds, and fill it with sunshine ? Unbelief closes the windows of the soul, and leaves all its apartments in moral gloom. He who would have this heavenly light streaming into him must *believe*. It is moreover stated here :

Fourthly : That this light is *the true light of "every man."* "That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Some render the words thus—"The true light which lighteth every man came into the world." If this is the correct rendering, the words are merely the expression of Christ's advent, but taking the words as they are in our version, the idea is that the life of Christ is a light for every man, and this is a glorious truth.*



Germes of Thought.

THE VISIONS OF PAUL.

Subject : THIRD VISION OF PAUL.

"And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night : There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, 'Come over to Macedonia, and help us.' And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the Gospel unto them."—Acts xvi. 8-10.

BETWEEN the vision in Jerusalem and that at Troas about ten years transpired, and in those ten years were included some very important events in the life of Paul.

* See a Homiletic Sketch on this passage, *Homilist*, vol. ii., Fourth Series, p. 48.

One thing very remarkable in connexion with this vision is its reference to the introduction of the Gospel to Europe—and while it is interesting to all, it should be so in particular to Europeans and Britons. A representation was made to the Apostle's mind to go over, and he went, and after staying there a while he passed on to Philippi, and Rome, and Spain. Now let us consider the spiritual matter of this vision itself:—"Come over to Macedonia, and help us." In these few words are expressed the distinctive character of Christianity, and the call of humanity for it.

I. ITS BENEVOLENCE. What is the Gospel? *Help* for man: such an help as God has provided and revealed for him. There have been things in the world called Christianity, which, instead of helping men, have injured, depressed, robbed, and persecuted them. They have done everything in their power to annihilate the essential elements and hopes of men as immortal beings. I am not now speaking of heathenism, immorality, or infidelity, but of that spurious Christianity that prostrates the understanding of man, by withholding from it the life, light, and bread which God has provided for its sustenance. In what does Christianity principally help man? It—

1. *Helps Man to know God.* That is what the world wanted then, and it needs it now. The nations possessed philosophy, and literature, and civilization, still they were "without hope and without God in the world."

2. *To preach Christ.* The intention of Paul in passing over to Europe was not merely to educate and to infuse new elements into its laws and customs, but to preach what they knew nothing about before—to preach Christ crucified—a reconciled more than a reconcilable God; to preach the mission, the incarnation, the death, the resurrection, the ascension of Jesus Christ to the throne of the universe; to preach man's gratuitous acceptance with God, without any works at all of law or life; to preach his restoration to God, and his union with Him for ever.

3. *To promote civilization.* Read the history of Greece,

Macedonia, and Achaia, and Rome itself, and you will see that with the most exalted civilization human nature sinks lower and lower, and still lower, without a restorative and conservative power from heaven. O blessed Gospel, our hope is in thee! Let knowledge spread, let great political questions be freely agitated and discussed, but let us never allow ourselves to be imposed upon by thinking that these things are what our precious souls require. No. It is to be right with God, right with itself, and right with the universe.

II. ITS INFLUENCE. There is no system which leaves a deeper impress upon character than the Gospel—"Piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit."

1. *It recognises the independent capacity of man as a moral agent.* "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

2. *It recognises the weakness of man.* Man wants not a substitute, but a help, and it is remarkable how many false notions there are respecting this point. People know that Christianity does something for man, but know not what, hence they expect too little or too much. We should remember that man possesses an original and independent power for reaching the end God intended. The sole aim of the Gospel is to quicken man's self-action, to regenerate that power, and help it to ascend to God; and without this help from God, man never could have helped himself.

III. ITS MINISTRATION. The principal instrumentality or agent in working out the salvation of mankind, is man. "Come over,"—a simple-hearted man as you are, come over, that is what we need. Before I withdraw from this subject and you, I am anxious to make a few observations respecting the appeals of humanity to us Christians:

1. *By the information of history.* Are not such appeals made to us very frequently? and I am sure not always successfully. The account of the heathen, savage nations is opened before us. We hear of their social degradation, their impious as well as insignificant and impure superstition; and we hear of

their inward thirst for God, religion, and happiness. And what does all this say? "Come over and help us."

2. *The general operation of Christian principle.* Sometimes we think of the preciousness of the soul, of the shortness of time, of the depth of eternity, the flames of hell and the happiness of heaven, the remedy God has intrusted to our hands, our own responsibility, and solemn account we must very soon give to the Judge of all; and we say, "O that we could do something for the heathen."

3. *Inward impressions.* Here was a communication made to Paul, that he felt and knew to be from God. There are times, God knows it, and we know it when our personal responsibility, our personal obligation to man and to God rises up so clearly before us, that it almost overwhelms us. O blessed sermons that produce such an effect. O blessed conversations that quicken us. O blessed afflictions and bereavements that make us feel so. O blessed tears and heart-rendings, and I go still further, falls and temptations, that by the overpowering grace of God bring us back to feel so; if it speaks distinctly, it is a ministration from heaven, a voice from God, a call from my Maker. God give me grace to obey the call and do as Paul did.

CALEB MORRIS.

(*To be continued*).

—o—

"Surely there is a *vein* for the silver. . . . The earth hath *dust of gold*."—Job xxviii.

The fact is undeniable that the portions of rock which have as yet proved to be richest in gold are those which are at or nearest the surface. Experience too, dearly bought in numberless instances, has taught the miner throughout long ages that as he follows the vein-stones downwards by deep shafts into the body of the rock, the gold diminishes in volume, so that in many cases the cost has been greater than the value of the metal obtained. Experience in every country has proved that the yield of gold decreases with the depth. Argentiferous lead, on the contrary, expands so largely downwards as to lead us to believe that it must yield enormous quantities of silver for ages to come. Providence seems to have adjusted the relative value of these two precious metals for the use of man, and their relations having remained the same for ages will long survive all theories. Modern science, in short, instead of contradicting, only confirms the truth of the aphorism of the patriarch Job, which thus shadowed forth the downward persistence of the one, and the superficial distribution of the other:—"Surely there is a *vein* for the silver. . . . The earth hath *dust of gold*."—*Sir Roderick Murchison, Bart., Siluria*, 4th ed.

The Pith of Renowned Sermons.

The sermons of some of the greatest preachers of England are lost to modern men through their verbosity; it is the intention, under this section, to give from time to time their pith and spirit.

No. XVI.—THOMAS MANTON, D.D.

Subject: RELIGIOUS HOPE.

“Good hope through grace.”—2 Thess. ii. 16.

IT is a great advantage, when we pray for consolation and confirmation in holiness to consider that God hath already given us the hope of eternal life.

Here I shall—I. Open the gift: II. Show what encouragement there is in prayer.

I. IN THE OPENING THE GIFT, let me inquire—

1. *What is the good hope mentioned, and what are the properties of it?*

(1.) Hope is sometimes put for the object or thing hoped for, as Prov. xiii. 12. The great objects of hope, which yet do not exclude intervening blessings, are these:—(a.) The coming of Christ to our comfort: Titus ii. 13—“Looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” Christ is now under a veil, His bodily presence being removed, and His spiritual glory seen but darkly, as in a glass; but then He shall appear in person, and in His glory. When Christ withdrew out of sight our comfort seemed to be gone with Him; but He will come again. (β.) The resurrection of the dead: Acts ii. 26—“My flesh shall rest in hope.” Death seemeth to make void all the promises at once; but there is an estate after death; the dead shall rise; and to men bred up in the bosom of the Church this should not seem incredible. (γ.) The vision of God, that at length we shall be admitted into His blessed presence, and see Him as He is, and be made like Him, both for holiness and happiness, 1 John iii. 2. (δ.) Our heavenly inheritance: 1 Peter i. 4—“An inheritance incorruptible and undefiled,

that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us." Called eternal life : Titus i. 2—"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised us."

(2.) Sometimes hope is put for the reasons and causes of hoping—and so he that giveth me solid reasons of hoping giveth me good hope.

(3.) By the act or grace of hope itself. This may be called good either in itself, or with respect to the degree. (a.) In itself: "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord."—Lam. iii. 26. *Bonum* is either *honestum*, *jucundum*, or *utile*; it is good in all regards. (β.) In respect of the degree and measure of it. That is good hope which is most able to do its office, when it is lively hope—1 Peter i. 3. Briefly, hope the grace is twofold—1st. There is a hope which is the immediate effect of regeneration, and is a constitutive part of the new creature. 2nd. There is a hope which is the fruit of experience, and belongeth to the seasoned and tried Christian, who hath approved his own fidelity to God, and hath much trial of God's fidelity and faithfulness to him.

But now for the effects. I shall instance two which suit with the prayers in the text—consolation in troubles, and confirmation in holiness.

First: Support in troubles. When we are certainly persuaded of a happy issue we are the better kept from fainting: Phil. i. 19—"I know that this shall turn to my salvation," &c. He speaketh it of his troubles, and the machinations of his adversaries, and this knowledge he calleth in the 20th verse "his earnest expectation and his hope." The bitterest cross is sweetened by hope. This carried him through his sufferings, not only with patience, but comfort, as men in a storm, when they see land, take courage; it is but enduring a little more tempest and they shall be safe on shore. To a hoping Christian, his whole life is a rough voyage, but a short one.

Secondly: To encourage us in working. It is hope sets the whole world a-work: 1 Cor. ix. 10—"That he that plougheth should plough in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope

should be partaker of his hope." Certainly it is hope sets the Christian a-work.

2. *That this is the free gift of God.* I must prove two things:—

(1). That good hope is His gift. The Spirit's work is necessary (a.) by way of illumination, to open the eyes of our minds, that we "may see what is the hope of his calling."—Eph. i. 18. (β.) By way of inclination. (γ.) By way of excitation. He doth quicken us and comfort us, by raising our thoughts, desires and endeavours, after the promised glory and blessedness (Rom. xv. 13).

(2.) That it is His free gift. That which moveth God to give us this hope is His mere love and grace (a.) The matter of hope is God's free, undeserved mercy; looking out for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life; there is our best and strongest plea. But (β.) For the grace of hope, it is the mere fruit of the Lord's mercy; such are our undeservings and ill-deservings, that nothing else could incline Him to give us this hope.

II. WHAT ENCOURAGEMENT IS THIS IN PRAYER, if God hath given us good hope through grace.

1. *God would not invite and raise a hope to disappoint it; for surely the Lord will not deceive His creature that dependeth upon His word, and therefore we are allowed to challenge Him (Ps. cxix. 49).*

2. *He that giveth us hope will give us all things necessary to the thing hoped for.*

3. *They that have received good hope through grace, have God's nature and promise to rest upon.*

(1.) His nature, as He is a God merciful and gracious.

(2.) His promise, so that we must trust His faithfulness, after we come under the hopes of the Gospel.

4. *It giveth encouragement in prayer; because they that have this hope are so much exposed to the scorn of the world because they trust in an invisible God, and look for all their recompense in a world to come.*

Variations on Themes from Scripture.

No. XXVII.

Subject : JOB'S COMFORTERS. (Job xvi. 1-4.)

MISERABLE comforters were they all, the man of Uz told Temanite, and Shuhite, and Naamathite. He had heard many such things before, as they had to tell him, but all their full sentences and rounded periods were void of comfort. He, too, could talk such comfort with the best of them, were he in their place; and he, too, could find fault with the best of them, were they the sufferers, and he the lecturer. "I also could speak as ye do, if your soul were in my soul's stead. I could heap up words against you, and shake mine head at you." It is not all quibble, what Brabantio says, in reply to the complacent counsel and condolence of one of high degree :—

"He bears the sentence well, that nothing bears
But the free comfort which from thence he hears;
But he bears both the sentence and the sorrow,
That, to pay grief, must of poor patience borrow.
These sentences, to sugar, or to gall,
Being strong on both sides, are equivocal;
But words are words; I never yet did hear
That the bruised heart was pierced through the ear."

That is, consoled by words. To Friar Lawrence's remonstrant appeal, "Let me dispute with thee of thy estate," Romeo's rejoinder is, "'Thou canst not speak of what thou dost not feel." In like mode Leonato bids his brother Antonio cease comfort and counsel that fall into his ears as profitless as water in a sieve :—

"For, brother, men
Can counsel, and speak comfort to, that grief
Which they themselves not feel. . . .
No, no; 'tis all men's office to speak patience
To those that wring under the load of sorrow;

But no man's virtue nor sufficiency,
To be so moral, when he shall endure
The like himself ; therefore give me no counsel ;
My griefs cry louder than advertisement."

That is, than admonition. As Benedict says in the same play, "Well, every one can master a grief but he that has it." Pandulph's rebuke of Constance bewailing her young Arthur, "You hold too heinous a respect of grief," only stirs her to the exclamation, "He talks to me that never had a son." Adriana, again, thus disposes of Luciana's essayings to comfort and compose her :—

"A wretched soul, bruised with adversity,
We bid be quiet, when we hear it cry ;
But were we burthen'd with like weight of pain,
As much, or more, we should ourselves complain."

Volumnia gives way, high-spirited Roman matron though she be, at the parting with her son, who recalls her sonorous precepts of old time, ere she had instant need of applying them, as a very present help in trouble—a help found absent now, conspicuous by its absence :—

"Nay, mother,
Where is your ancient courage ? you were used
To say extremity was the trier of spirits :
. You were used to load me
With precepts that would make invincible
The heart that conn'd them ;"

but which, somehow, the preceptor (or preceptress) had not learnt by heart, so as now to apply in practice.

Rasselas believes himself to have found in a certain rhetorical sage a wise and happy man, who, from the unshaken throne of rational fortitude, looks down on the scenes of life changing beneath him. But anon the sage is found to be querulously disconsolate at a family bereavement. "Sir," says the prince to him, "mortality is an event by which a wise man can never be surprised : we know that death is always near, and it should therefore always be expected." "Young man," answers the philosopher, "you speak like one that has never felt the pangs of separation." "Have you

then forgotten," asks Rasselas, "the precepts which you so powerfully enforced? Has wisdom no strength to arm the heart against calamity? Consider that external things are naturally variable, but truth and reason are always the same." "What comfort," returns the mourner, "can truth and reason afford me? Of what effect are they now, but to tell me that my daughter will not be restored?" And the prince, whose humanity will not suffer him to insult misery with reproof, goes away convinced of the emptiness of rhetorical sound, and the inefficacy of polished periods and studied sentences.

The French moralist's note of exclamation is note-worthy : "Combien de belles et inutiles raisons à étaler à celui qui est dans une grande adversité, pour essayer de le rendre tranquille!" One touch of nature there is in Addison's Marcus when he impatiently breaks in upon his brother's polished periods and studied sentences, meant to tranquillize :—

"These are suggestions of a mind at ease :
O Portius! didst thou taste but half the griefs
That wring my soul, thou couldst not talk thus coldly."

It is easy, says Jeremy Taylor, for him that is well to give a sick man counsel : *Verum tu si hic esses, certè aliter sentiret* : "when it comes to be his own case, when the sickness pinches him, . . . where's the fine oration then?" Gentleman Waife, in a well-known fiction, is described as adopting, on a particular occasion, the general method of consolers who set out on the principle that grief is a matter of logic,—delivering himself, accordingly, of a series of reflections with a vigour of ratiocination which "admitted of no reply, and conveyed not a particle of comfort." When Margaret Ramsay, in Scott's *Nigel*, is exhorted by the Lady Hermione to cultivate patience, "the only remedy against the evils of my life," "Yes, madam," she answers, drying her eyes, and trying in vain to suppress her present impatience, "I have heard so—very often indeed; and I dare say I have myself, heaven forgive me, said so to people in perplexity and affliction; but it was before I had suffered perplexity and vexation myself." Parson Adams essaying to compose and calm down Joseph

Andrews, with smooth-drawn periods of unexceptionable soundness, "O Sir," cries Joseph, "all this is very true, and very fine, and I could hear you all day, if I was not so grieved at heart as now I am." "Would you take physic," says Adams, "when you are well, and refuse it when you are sick? Is not comfort to be administered to the afflicted, and not to those who rejoice, or to those who are at ease?" "O you have not spoke one word of comfort to me yet," cries Joseph. Nor is he more amenable to the parson's citation of wise men and philosophers who have written against the folly of grief,—“quoting several passages from Seneca, and the Consolation, which, though it was not Cicero's, was, he [Adams] said, as good almost as any of his works.”* Mr. Dickens characterizes the stoicism of his Mr. Dennis as of that not uncommon kind, which enables a man to bear with exemplary fortitude the afflictions of his friends, but renders him by way of counterpoise, rather selfish and sensitive in regard of any that happen to befall himself. Epictetus in his *Enchi-*

* Some eight or nine chapters later, Parson Adams himself falls into sore trouble. Tidings suddenly reach him that his youngest boy is drowned. And Joseph has ample opportunity of noting how much easier it is for even a ripe scholar and parish priest to give advice than take it; to "offer" consolation than to accept and appropriate it, in his own hour of need.

A kind physician, in Mrs. Gaskell's *North and South*, endeavours to console an affectionate rector, who has just lost his wife: "But all the reply he got, was in the choked words, 'You have never been married, Dr. Donaldson; you do not know what it is,' and in the deep, manly sobs, which went through the stillness of the night like heavy pulses of agony."

Mackenzie's Montauban is for once, and at once, kind and wise, when he says on coming to see Roubigné on the day of his losing his wife, "I will not endeavour to stop the current of your grief: that comfort which the world offers at times like these, flows not from feeling, and cannot be addressed to it."

The bereaved father, in Hood's *Tylney Hall*, is not quieted, but disquieted in vain, by the words of condolence—for they are vain words, and therefore words in vain—of his friend the Justice. "You think I'm womanish," said the baronet, "but it's easy for a father who has not lost a son, to say, Compose yourself, to one who has."

The bereaved autobiographer of the *Gates Ajar* finds all her neigh-

ridion points out that if the son or the wife of another dies, everybody is ready to declare, "It is the common fate of mortals;" but if their own dies, immediately their exclamation is, "Woe's me! Wretched, most wretched!" 'Ρᾶον παραινεῖν, ἢ παθόντα καρτερεῖν, says one old gnostic versemaker. And another, 'Ετερον τι τῶν λέγειν ἐστὶ τὸ πεπονθέναι. Goethe's officious counsellor and *ex officio* comforter, the irrepressible Mittler, is rebuffed on one occasion with the retort, "It is well for the man who is happy, who has all that he desires, to talk : but he would be ashamed of it if he could see how intolerable it is to the sufferer." Farther on we have this from the lips of the same speaker : "It is only when we suffer ourselves, that we feel really the true nature of all the high qualities which are required for the endurance of suffering." As the Roman poet words it in an old English play, by way of plea for one whose complaints are loud and instant,—

"We may read constancy and fortitude
To other souls; but had ourselves been struck . . .
It would have crack'd our sinews, shrunk our veins,
And made our very heart-strings jar, like his."

A scene later there occurs this passage between two other Roman poets, Tibullus and Propertius :—

Tib. "You yield too much unto your griefs and fate,
Which never hurts, but when we say it hurts us.

Prop. "O peace, Tibullus; your philosophy
Lends you too rough a hand to search my wounds.
Speak they of griefs, that know to sigh and grieve:
The free and unconstrained spirit feels
No weight of my oppression."

It has sometimes occasioned expressions of surprise that the earliest of English tragedies, the *Ferrex and Porrex* of Sack-

bours of one accord that she is to become "resigned in an arithmetical manner, and comforted according to the Rule of Three. . . . If nobody need ever speak any more words to me!" is her wailing wish : "If anybody only knew *what* to say!—Little Mrs. Bland has been ever very kind, and I thank her with all my heart. But she does not know. She does not understand. Her happy heart is bound up in her little live children. She never laid anybody away under the snow without a chance to say good-bye."

ville, Earl of Dorset (played at Whitehall in 1616), should contain lines so free from crabbed age, and the signs of it, as those in which Acastus counsels Gorboduc, and these in which Gorboduc appraises the counsel :—

“Many can yield right sage and grave advice
Of patient sprite to others wrapt in woe,
And can in speech both rule and conquer kind,
Who, if by proof they might feel nature's force,
Would show themselves men as they are indeed,
Which now will needs be gods.”

FRANCIS JACOX.



The Preacher's Dissecting Room ;

CONTAINING

PEN PORTRAITS OF REPRESENTATIVE PREACHERS.

“WITHOUT A PARABLE SPAKE HE NOT UNTO THEM.”

Complaints against the modern pulpits are rife alike in social circles and literary productions. Whilst many of them are characterized by flippant ignorance and sceptical rancour, others are marked both by good judgment and holy feeling. The purpose of these Sketches is the improvement of the pulpit. Nothing would the writer deprecate more than to wound the heart or get the finger of ridicule pointed at any honest-hearted preacher of Christ; hence he has clad his characters and circumstances with a fictitious vesture—like the Great Teacher, he has spoken in parables. We shall examine representative preachers of the four great prevailing schools—the SENSATIONAL, including (1.) the tragic; (2.) the comic; (3.) the rhapsodic. The INTELLECTUAL, including (1.) the technical; (2.) the grandiloquent; (3.) the philosophic. The SPIRITUAL, including (1.) the mystical; (2.) the intuitional; and the NONDESCRIPT, including a great variety.

No. III.

THE RHAPSODIC PREACHER.

(Continued from page 165.)

WE have said that this rhapsodic preacher was very Evangelical; indeed, he regarded himself as one of the leaders of the Evangelical party in the Church of England, and no small number of his own communion looked lovingly and reverentially to him in that aspect: albeit he was destitute of any genuine Catholicity. He was a very Pharisee, if not in affected sanctity, yet in religious exclusiveness. “Our Church,” to him, was at once the boundary of

his ecclesiastical intelligence and religious sympathies. All outside its pale had no virtues that heaven would accept! no worth that a Churchman should recognise. The Wesleyans, Independents, and Baptists, who had large congregations in his parish, and who were zealous in their endeavours to improve the social condition, and save the souls of the people, he branded as schismatics, and classed with Jews, heathens, Mahommedans, and infidels;—all on their way to hell. Nor was he, though a leading Evangelical, distinguished by any genuine philanthropy. He employed two curates, both Oxford men, hard workers in his parish, and one far superior to himself in natural ability, and scholastic attainments; but he treated them with a supercilious bearing, and with a scanty acknowledgment of their services. His income was upwards of £1,500 a year, but theirs did not average £100 each, and though well-clad, they were too ill fed to carry any Gospel in their face. He was one of the men who raised large sums for missionaries abroad, but left the curates of his own Church in a state of pauperism, and many of them even begging for old clothes.

But it is as a preacher we have to deal with him. On the Sunday morning which we heard him, there could not have been less than 2,000 persons present. Whilst the great body of the congregation was comprised of the middle class, there were nobles, merchant-princes, and even statesmen amongst them. The prayers were read by one of the curates—and they were well read—read with a commanding voice, with elocutionary grace, and devotional tenderness and power. They chanted Ps. xxii., *Deus, Deus, Mens—*

“But as for me, I am a worm, and no man, a very scorn of men, and the outcast of the people.

“All they that see me laugh me to scorn; they shoot out their lips and shake their heads.

“O, go not from me, for trouble is hard at hand: and there is none to help me.

“Many oxen are come about me; fat bulls of Bashan close me in on every side.

“They gape upon me with their mouths: as it were a ramping and a roaring lion.

“I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart also in the midst of my body is even like melting wax.

“My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my gums: and thou shalt bring me into the dust of death.

“For many dogs are come about me: and the counsel of the wicked layeth siege against me.”

We confess that when these words were chanted an impression which we have long had, as to the impropriety of our

Church chanting the Psalms without selection, was deepened to a painfulness. The hearing of a large congregation, most of them in health, not a few stalwart and plethoric, musically exclaiming,—“I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart, also, in the midst of my body, is even like melting wax. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my gums, and thou shalt bring me unto the dust of death”—seemed then, to us, most terribly farcical and profane.

When the Liturgical service was over the preacher ascended the pulpit, and after reading the usual short prayer gave out his text:—“*Precious blood of Christ.*”

Having made sundry preliminary remarks touching original sin, and God's predestinating love, he glanced at the history of the crucifixion, and then came to the text—the preciousness of Christ's blood. He said:—

“The blood of Christ was—First: Precious, because of its cleansing efficacy. He represented all souls as defiled in every sentiment and faculty, and there was nothing that could cleanse them but this blood. Beloved! two things are necessary for Heaven—washing and robing. You must be stripped naked and dipped in this fountain filled with blood, and when the Spirit of God has brought you out of this Fountain of blood, your naked souls must be clothed with the robe of righteousness. This robe of righteousness—the beauty of saints, the admiration of heaven—all must have before they can enter the celestial world, and none can have it until they are washed in the Fountain of blood—

‘There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins.’

O Beloved! repair to this Fountain! Secondly: Precious because of its redeeming merit. You are redeemed with this blood, bought with this blood, purchased with this blood! Every soul was sold by sin, was forfeited to eternal justice to be tormented for ever and ever; Christ shed His blood to buy it back. Justice would not deliver up one without this blood! O Beloved! how precious is this blood! Ah! how many million souls have been redeemed and are now in heaven, and how many more will be redeemed—and each soul is of more value than a world! O how precious, then, must be the most infinitesimal part of this blood! Yes, the smallest particle is of more value than the universe! Thirdly: Precious because of its nutritious character. ‘My blood is drink indeed,’ says Christ. Nothing but this blood can quench the burning thirst of the soul for happiness. The soul, unless it partakes of this blood, has no strength in it—no life in it—is dead! Fourthly: Precious because of its reconciling merit. We had incurred the displeasure of God; His wrath was kindled, and He was burning with holy indignation. What could quench that wrath? All the waters of ten thousand oceans could not do it. Christ's blood alone can do this! ‘The Father quenched His flaming sword in this atoning blood.’ O Beloved! has this precious blood availed for you? Have you been cleansed, purchased, fed, reconciled by it? If not, why—oh, why? You have only to believe in what he did 1800 years ago on Calvary, and your soul will be cleansed—your debt to justice will be discharged, and your God will

be reconciled to you! Christ's righteousness will be imputed to you! You have nothing else to do! You *can* do nothing else—you *need* do nothing else! Simple faith in the transactions of Calvary will make right the past, and brighten the everlasting future! Ah, beloved, how precious this blood! Oh, give a glance at this blood! See—oh! see it streaming from His tortured hands and agonized sides! Beloved, see the hand that made the world, and wielded heaven's sceptre, bleeds with the piercing nail! He—He hath redeemed us by His blood—His own precious blood! Oh! this picture, this overwhelming picture! An eternal dungeon and a Divine Redeemer! Oh, weep, weep, these eyes of mine! Break, break, break, this cold heart! Send, O send heavenward your exulting hallelujah, O dumb lips! Rise, expand, soar, triumph, O ransomed spirit!"

The preacher delivered this discourse with great artistic effect. His gestures were most graceful and expressive; the tones of his fine voice were often thrilling, and his tears were electric. From the pulpit there radiated a magnetic something that seemed to sweep over every heart. Heartily did the whole congregation appear to join in the concluding hymn, of which the following verse is a specimen:—

—“Come let us stand beneath the cross,
So may the blood from out His side
Fall gently on us drop by drop;
Jesus our Lord is crucified.”

What shall we say about this sermon, which may be taken as a specimen of ten thousand discourses that are delivered every week in Christendom? Can we commend it? Can we honestly exhort our countrymen to put themselves under its influence? Alas! no. Alas! because it is truly painful to feel one's self in antagonism with sentiments and services which are associated with the most sacred and salutary institutions of the world. With no feeling but that of kindness and affection for all sincere preachers of the Holy Word, whether mistaken or not, we should not be just to our own convictions, in not saying that the preaching of which the above sermon is a specimen tends to at least four great evils:—

First: Ritualism. What is ritualism but the exalting of the symbol above the thing signified, the letter above the spirit, the form above the substance? Now, the blood of Christ is but a symbol. In His blood, as a material substance, there was no more preciousness than in the blood of Stephen. Suppose that under the Roman Government at the time of Christ, capital punishment had been by strangulation, starvation, burning, or poison—Socrates died by poison—in that case Christ would have died without any blood-shedding. But would His death then have been less morally significant and influential? *No*; a thousand times no. His blood was

the symbol of a self-sacrificing love, that was unconquerable and infinite. The self-sacrificing spirit of Christ is Christianity, is the power of God to man's salvation. That His blood is only used as a symbol is clear from the fact that the very same moral achievements that are ascribed to it in the New Testament are also ascribed to "Truth," and to "the Word," to "the Gospel," "the Cross," and to "the Love of God." Evangelicals in our Church denounce "the Ritualists," as they are called, without measure and without mercy; but is there a worse ritualism than the ritualism of such sermons as this? Such preaching tends to—

Secondly: Unspirituality. The whole of this sermon was an appeal to the senses. The soul was brought rather into the slaughterhouse of cruelty than into the sanctuary of love. The feelings excited were animal not moral, the bodily sensibilities were stirred, not the spiritual sentiments. There was no appeal to the profoundest loves in the human soul—the love of truth and the love of right, the love of the beautiful and the divine. Such sensational excitement is to the soul what alcoholic stimulus is to the body—life to the passions, but death to the stamina. Such preaching tends to—

Thirdly: Irreligion. What is religion? Supreme love to God. Where this supreme love is not, whatever else a man may possess, he has no religion. The root of the matter is not in him, he lacks the "one thing needful." But God, to be supremely loved, must appear supremely loveable. Is there anything loveable in the Divine character exhibited in the sermon before us? On the contrary, the character of One burning with a wrath towards His creatures, which refused all satisfaction but the torture and the death of an innocent Being, is a character most hideous and abhorrent, a character from which the human soul, according to its very constitution, is bound to recoil with horror and with hate. Such sermons which are blasphemous libels on the Divine character, strike at the root of all genuine religion. Because such preaching is so popular in Christendom, its religion is for the most part that of heathenish superstition and fear, rather than that of adoring love and exultant worship. Such preaching tends to—

Fourthly: Immorality. The sermon before us assures the congregation that they have only to believe what took place on Calvary 1,800 years ago, in order to make them right for ever. It matters not how great their sins have been, are, and may be, this belief will put them all right. By it they will have "the righteousness of Christ imputed to them," by it they will be able to stand in the universe higher even than the

angels who have never sinned. Far enough am I from suggesting that the men who propound, or the men who accept this doctrine, are immoral in a conventional sense. For the most part, it may be, they stand before society as most faultless and praiseworthy in their external deportment. But conventional morality is often essentially immoral; the soul of morality consists in a disinterestedness of motive, a self-abnegating philanthropy, and an entire consecration to the true, the right, and the Divine. And such preaching we proclaim as hostile to such morality.

EPISCOPUS.



A Talmudic Study with St. Paul;

OR,

GLEANINGS FROM DELITZSCH'S NOTES TO HIS "PAULUS DES APOSTELS BRIEF AN DIE RÖMER IN DAS HEBRÄISCHE ÜBERSATZT UND AUS TALMUD UND MIDRASH ERLÄUTERT" (PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS TRANSLATED INTO HEBREW AND ELUCIDATED FROM THE TALMUD AND MIDRASH).

(Continued from p. 175.)

CHAPTER V.—1. "Peace," &c. "Great is the peace, for when Messiah comes, he will begin no otherwise than with peace; that is, peace is his first word, for it is said, Is. lii. 7, 'How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the Evangelist, of him who proclaims peace.'" *Vayikra rabba*, c. 9, *extr.*¹

3. "Not only, but." A similar form is customary in the Palest. Talm. and Midr. e.g., Jerus. *Aboda Zara* I. 1. Resch Lakesch says, "One may go to heathen markets not only to buy Israelitish slaves, but also (אֶת הַגֵּוֹיִם = אֶת הַגֵּוֹלִים) heathen ones." And *Midrash* on *Ruth* iv. 2: "Ten persons must be present, not only if a young man marries a maiden, but also if a widower marries a widow."

12. "By one man." A Haggada in the *Pesikta de-Rab Ca-*

¹ For the explanation of this and other terms not explained in this paper, see the notes to the former portion, in *The Homilist*, March 1871.

hana, 118^a says: "When Adam had eaten of that tree, all generations appeared near him and said to him: Perhaps you think that God has treated you too severely. He answered: By no means; I have brought death upon myself." The fact that death is the consequence of sin (the sin of the race, if not of the individual), is implied in the maxim *Shabbath*, 55^a. "No man dieth and hath not sinned." And we read in the Midrash *Tanchuma*, 90^b. "The Holy One, blessed be He, has promised in reference thereto that in this world the years shall be shortened by the inherited tendency to evil, and that in the future there shall be an end of death, and every tear shall be dried."

14. "*Even over those*," &c. The Talmud, *Shabbath*, 55^b, says of these (though it erroneously supposes the pure antithesis, viz., the fulfilment of the whole law, in certain individuals): "they died through the counsel of the serpent." Τύπος. In *Jalkut chadash*, f. 143, N. 59, it is said of the life of David that it was מַעֲיִן דִּינִקְמָא שֶׁל מַעֲיִין, that is, a kind of δέιγμα, and then a ὑπόδειγμα (Heb. viii. 5, ix. 23) of the Messiah.

15-19. R. Jose the Galilean pursues a similar mode of reasoning *à minori ad majus*. After referring to the vast number of deaths which resulted from the transgression of the first Adam, he asks, "Which, then, is the mightier power, that of good, or of evil?" and he answers: "The power of goodness predominates. The King Messiah, who took suffering and sorrow upon Himself for the offenders, as it is said: 'He is pierced for our crimes'—how much more will His suffering be of meritorious results to whole generations, as it is written: The Lord made the guilt of us all to strike upon Him." The passage occurs as an excerpt from *Sifri*, in Raymundus Martini's *Pugio fidei*, vid. Schöttgen *de Messia*, p. 652, and Biesenthal on *Rom.* v. 15.

VI.—4. "*Walk in newness of life*." In *Pesikta de-Rab Kahana*, 181^a, and elsewhere with reference to Ps. cii. 18, it is said of the future generation, that "God transforms it into a new creature."

7. "*He that is dead is freed from sin.*" Similarly *Shabbath*, 30^a, 151^b. *Nidda*,¹ 61 (deriving the principle from Psalm lxxxviii. 5): "If the man is dead, he has become free from the law and the commandments."

VII.—17. "*Sin that dwelleth in me.*" In *Bereschith rabba*,² c. 22, it is remarked on Gen. iv. 7, that "sin is first a guest, and then the master."

(*To be continued*).

—o—

The Trial of Abraham.

GEN. xxii. 1-19.

BEING AN ATTEMPT TO EXHIBIT THE JEWISH INTERPRETATION OF THIS REMARKABLE EVENT FROM THE MOST ANCIENT TIME.

THE Jewish interpretations of the offering of Isaac may be divided into two general classes—I. The Traditional, contained in the Midrashim, the Talmud, the Chaldee Paraphrases, &c., and followed by those mediæval and more modern commentators who adhere to the voice of tradition; and II. The Philosophical, advanced by the philosophical Jews of the Middle Ages, as represented by Jehudah ha-Levi (A.D. 1086-1142), Maimonides (1135-1204), Nachmanides (1195-1270), &c.

I. *The Traditional Interpretation.*—All the ancient interpretations agree that the trial of Abraham took place, not that God might ascertain whether or not Abraham would obey the Divine command, but for the benefit of others. It is in attempting to point out the individual or individuals for whose benefit the trial took place that these commentators differ.

(a.) The most ancient traditional interpretation positively asserts that the trial of Abraham took place in consequence of an altercation between Ishmael and Isaac as to their respective right to the primogeniture and inheritance of their father. "Ishmael declared, 'It is my right to inherit the father's property, for I am the first-born;' whilst Isaac said, 'I have the right to the inheritance of the father, because I am the son of Sarah his wife, and thou art the son of Hagar, my mother's handmaid.' To which Ishmael replied, 'I am more worthy than thou, for although I was

¹ Talm. Tr. on the Impurities of Women.

² The first portion of the *Midrash rabba*. *Vid.* note on *Rabbeth*.

thirteen years old I submitted to be circumcised, which I could have prevented had I been unwilling to undergo this painful operation, whilst thou wert circumcised when eight days old; and who knows whether thou wouldst have submitted to the pain if thou hadst my knowledge?' Whereupon Isaac answered, 'I would not only endure this, but would willingly and cheerfully give my life as a sacrifice, if God should demand it.' * It was "after these words" (אֲחֵר הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה) which Ishmael and Isaac had together, that God tried Abraham to show that Isaac was ready to submit to greater pain and a more noble sacrifice than those of Ishmael.

(b.) Equally ancient is the interpretation that God tried Abraham to vindicate the justice of His moral government, as well as to exalt the patriarch in the sight of all his contemporaries. "This event transpired for the honour of Divine truth and retribution in the world. For men might say that God arbitrarily enriches whom He wishes to make rich, impoverishes whom He wishes to make poor, and exalts whom He wishes to exalt, as in the case of Abraham, whom He exalted and made rich. Now, in reply to all such cavillings, it may be said, Canst thou do as much as Abraham did? He who, after much anguish, had a son at a very advanced age, was told, 'Take now thy son, thine only son,' yet did not hesitate. Thus, O God, Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee, that it may be displayed (Ps. lx. 4). . . . Like the skilful artizan who does not select fragile materials to test the power of his hammer, but the more solid the stuff the harder he strikes it: so God does not try the wicked, but only those saints who He knows will steadfastly shine forth in goodness." † According to this interpretation, therefore, נִסָּה is derived from נָסַח, to lift up, to exalt; and the meaning of the passage is made to be, "And God exalted Abraham," i.e., in the eyes of all by the event which is recorded in this chapter.

(c.) Another ancient interpretation is, that it was not God at all who tried Abraham, but Satan; and that God only permitted it, as in the case of Job, to confute the malignant charges brought by the adversary against the patriarch. We are told that "the day came when the sons of God appeared before the Lord, and Satan was among them; and the Lord asked him what he thought of Abraham. To which he replied, 'Now since his son is born to him he has forsaken Thee; he has made a great feast for all the inhabitants of the land, but has forgotten the Lord; for amidst all that he has done he brought Thee no offering, neither burnt-offering, nor peace-offering, neither ox, nor lamb, nor goat, of all that he killed, on the day that his son was circumcised'

* Comp. *Midrash Rabbah* on Genesis, section lv.; the *Book of Jashur*, Pericope *Ta-Yera*, p. 28 b., ed. Prag 1840; Rashi on Gen. xxii. 1. This explains the otherwise inexplicable Chaldee Paraphrase of the so-called Jonathan b. Uzziel on Gen. xxii. 1.

† *Midrash Rabbah* on Genesis, section lv.

(comp. Gen. xxi. 8).” * It was “after these words” (אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה) of Satan that God allowed Abraham to be tried.

(d.) Another ancient view is, that Satan is simply the evil tendency in the human heart, and that it was the inward voice of the evil spirit which made Abraham accuse himself of not having done enough for God, and which suggested to him to sacrifice his dearest treasure on earth to the Lord, who had done so much for him.† The whole scene, therefore, was simply suggested in the mind of Abraham. A similar instance, where the same temptation is ascribed both to God and to Satan, is found in the life of David (comp. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1 with 1 Chron. xxi. 1).

The ancient interpretations, which regard the temptation as proceeding from God Himself, fully realize the difficulty that the Lord first commanded Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, and then again countermands it. Those, therefore, who advocate this view, represent Abraham in perplexity, asking God for an explanation. “How am I to understand it, O my God! First, Thou sayest to me, ‘In Isaac shall thy seed be called.’ Then again thou commandest me to bring him as an offering; and then again Thou bidst me not to lay my hand on him.” To which the voice of the Lord answers, “My covenant I will not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips” (Ps. lxxxix. 34.) My words are, “Take thy son and bring him up unto the whole-offering”—i.e., bring him in love to me to the offering which I shall appoint.‡

This is the meaning of the command, but not to kill him as a sacrifice. Accordingly Abraham entirely mistook the Divine command, since God never meant to ask him to sacrifice Isaac. וְהַעֲלֵהוּ simply means *bring him up*, and the לְהַעֲלֵה denotes *direction towards the object*.

It must, however, be added that those interpreters regard the whole as having transpired in a dream in the night.

DR. GINSBERG.

(To be continued).

* *Babylon Sanhedrin*, 89 b.; comp. also *Midrash Rabboth* on Genesis, section lv.; and especially the *Book of Jashar*, *Pericope Va-Yera*, where the circumstance is more fully given than in the Talmud.

† *Midrash Rabboth* on Genesis, section lv.

‡ *Midrash Rabboth* on Genesis, section lvi. Hence the remark of Rashi on Gen. xxii. 2. It is to this interpretation that Ibn Ezra refers in the half sceptical and half satirical remark on Gen. xxii. 2. “Others say that the meaning of the phrase, וְהַעֲלֵהוּ שָׁם, is, *take him to the mountain, and this will be accounted to thee as an offering*. Abraham, however, not understanding the import of the vision, hastened to sacrifice him, when God said to him, *This is not what I asked.*”

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

PETER'S QUESTION AND OUR LORD'S ANSWER.

"Peter seeing him [the disciple whom Jesus loved] following, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee; follow thou me."—John xxi. 21, 22.

LET us consider—

I. PETER'S QUESTION.

Two things :—

First: *Indicated deep interest in his brother disciple.* Peter and John, though very different in temperament, were fast friends. They seem to have been neighbours' children; brought up together; intimately associated all their life. As disciples of Jesus their friendship had been hallowed and strengthened. In joy and in sorrow, through good report and evil report, they had been faithful to each other. More frequently than any of the rest, they are found associated and acting in concert—cf. Luke xxii. 8; John xiii. 24; xx. 3; xxi. 7; Acts iii. 1; viii. 14. It seems, therefore, in the highest degree natural that Peter should manifest a special interest in John. "And what shall this man do?" The question is one that has troubled many. Friend asks it concerning friend. The mother as she bends over her sleeping child ponders it in

her heart. The father, as he bids good-bye to the son that is going forth to seek his fortune in the world, anxiously revolves the awful problem. So of ministers and their people.

Secondly: *Unbounded confidence in Christ.* In *His Truth*. Peter believed all that his Lord had said as to himself. In *His prescience*. Had faith in Jesus as one endowed with Divine insight and knowledge. But a little before he had said, in a moment of deep feeling, "Lord, thou knowest all things," v. 17. Had the witness in himself that this was true—cf. John i. 42; Matt. xxvi. 34; Luke xxii. 31, 32. In *His faithfulness and power*. Knew that He would care for His own; that the Good Shepherd would not suffer any of his sheep to be lost—John x. 27, 28. Happy those who have such faith in Christ. They not only know that He will keep that which they themselves have committed unto Him, but that they can trust Him to take care of their nearest and dearest. For friends to be disciples of Jesus, is to be joined in everlasting fellowship—Rom. viii. 35-39; John xvii. 24; John xiv. 1-3.

II. CHRIST'S ANSWER TO PETER'S QUESTION. Here we may observe—

First: *Unreasonable curiosity*

rebuked. Peter's interest in John was natural, but he had been too bold. He had presumed to ask too much. Hence the rebuke, "What is that to thee." Let this teach us silence. There are many things not revealed. These belong not to us (Deut. xxix. 29). It is in love that the veil is not drawn aside. Better for us not to know what shall be on the morrow. We could not look upon the awful sight and possess our souls in patience. Were the future revealed to us we should say with Adam, in *Paradise Lost*—

"O visions ill-foreseen! Better
had I
Lived ignorant of future!" &c.

Secondly: *Quiet acquiescence in the Lord's will recommended.* Rest in the Lord. There is no fear as to John. His destiny is in the hands of One who knows and loves him better than Peter. So it is with respect to all. No two lives are alike. How different the future of Peter from that of John, but each was ordered by infinite wisdom. "*If I will.*" How sublime. It is the voice of the Supreme Ruler, "in whose hand is the soul of every living thing and the breath of all mankind" (Job xii. 10). The *Will* of Jesus is ever holy and benevolent. How consoling to think that all power in heaven and in earth has been given to Him; that He is

Head over all kings to the Church. "Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."

Thirdly: *Following Christ enjoined as the Supreme Duty.* Leave your brother's destiny in the hands of the Lord to be manifested in due time. Take up thine own cross. "Follow thou Me." This gives us some hints as to *true religion*. It is *following Christ*. It is a personal, imperative duty. It is transcendently important, taking precedence of everything else. It demands faith and self-sacrifice. It requires courageous, patient effort. It implies progress, "Nearer my God, nearer to Thee." It is peace and joy; it is holy fellowship; it is loving service; it is light; it is glory, honour, and immortality.

Art thou following Christ? (Matt. xvi. 24-28; 1 Pet. i. 21; 2 Pet. i. 5-11; Rev. vii. 14-17.) Amen.

WILLIAM FORSYTH, A.M.
Abernethy.

SKETCHES FROM GENESIS.

"ISAAC'S MARRIAGE."—Gen.
XXIV.

THAT a whole chapter in God's Word should be written on this subject evidently shows that the event is not without its lessons to us. We shall offer three remarks on this important theme—

I. THE SELECTION OF THE BRIDE. Abraham having lost his wife, and perhaps begin-

ning to feel old age creeping stealthily upon him, thought it time that the promised son should be married and settled in life. He was not indifferent to his son's welfare, therefore the command is given to the servant not to take a wife for Isaac from the daughters of Canaan. "That thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell." If his example were followed by parents in the present day, doubtless much of their children's misery would be averted. Abraham gave this command—

First: *Because the Canaanites differed from Isaac in their taste.* The history of these people shows them, as a rule—there were few exceptions—steeped in the vilest sins and most disgusting depravity. This was the cause of that fearful judgment on the cities of the plain. Where sin reigns, the taste becomes low and disgusting. The best way of elevating the taste of a nation is to Christianize it. Supreme love to Christ refines the mind, and intensifies the love for the beautiful and sublime in a man's heart. Refined and polished manners are not to be despised, but let them be based on true, and not superficial morality. Then, and then only, can we hope for the prosperity and felicity of individuals and nations. When two are to be united together for life, it is

of the utmost importance that there be no material difference in their taste, because they need one another's sympathy and support in the trials and difficulties of life. The one is intended to help and comfort the other: the home is to be a scene of concord and peace, which can never be the case if the two widely differ in taste, especially with regard to religious matters.

Secondly: *Because a bad influence might be exerted on Isaac's mind.* Abraham was very anxious concerning this. When the servant suggested the possibility of the bride's reluctance to leave her country without Isaac going to fetch her, "Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again." He was evidently afraid, if he went, that some attractions might be strong enough to induce him to remain, and thus the promise of God be lost. Isaac had been brought up in the fear of the Lord; there is no knowing what a pernicious influence an ungodly wife might have. Society exerts a mighty influence, for good or evil, on all, and the closest relationship, but it must necessarily exert the most. Of this we have instances in the lives of Samson and Solomon; of the latter it is said, "For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods; and

his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father."

Thirdly: *Because the Canaanites were to be destroyed.* This was known to Abraham. They were to be cut off, and his seed to inherit the land. They had no part in the promises, therefore there could be no alliance between his family and theirs. It is only right that in matrimonial engagements some thoughts of the future should fill the mind. Is the race to be benefited? Is the character of future generations likely to be influenced for the better? Is there any probability of the family becoming *men*, engaged in rearing structures which shall stand in spite of the ravages of time; employed in doing good, the only lasting and permanent thing man can engage in? What an honour to be the parents of those who are destined to leave their foot-prints on the sands of time, and that, for the eternal welfare of coming generations!

II. THE MEANS EMPLOYED TO ENSURE SUCCESS.

First: *The employment of human instrumentality.* The most devoted and faithful servant was despatched to seek a suitable wife for the heir of the promise; before he went he made an oath, "By the Lord, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth," that the command of his master should be obeyed.

In forming a union for life, there are not a few who trust to outward appearances, than which nothing is more deceptive. The character is of far greater value than personal appearance; and in order to ascertain the real character the greatest care ought to be taken, and all human means at our command employed to that end.

Secondly: *Trust in God.* Great faith in the Invisible was manifested by all the parties concerned, especially by Isaac and Rebekah. Marriage is instituted of God for the continuance of the race and the well-being of man. It is one of the most solemn engagements human beings can enter into; therefore the will of Him who is the source of all wisdom ought to be consulted in the matter, and the most perfect trust and confidence placed in His guidance. By this it is not meant that heaven decrees so that man can have no choice in the affair, but that man ought so to frame his course in accordance with the laws of heaven, that he may have reasonable grounds to expect future usefulness.

Thirdly: *Self-renunciation.* Rebekah was convinced that the hand of God was in this thing, therefore she hesitated not for a moment to give her consent; whatever selfish projects she might have previously formed in her mind, they are at once renounced—

she bends to the will of heaven. Isaac, on his part, did not show any selfish propensities, but was contented with the arrangements made by his aged parent. The selfish mind seldom succeeds in matrimony more than in anything else; the laws of heaven seem to fight against the proud and self-willed. Wherever this spirit is revealed there is pain and misery; this is increased a thousand-fold if it reign in the family. When the husband is ready to sacrifice self for the wife, and the wife for the husband, home becomes a kind of paradise regained on the earth, and blessed are their children.

III. THE SPIRIT IN WHICH THIS MARRIAGE WAS CONSUMMATED.

First: *In a modest spirit.* The closing scene in this chapter is one full of the greatest modesty. When Rebekah saw Isaac "she lighted off the camel;" and when she knew that it was him, "she took a veil, and covered herself." There is nothing more becoming, and, therefore, more lovely, than modesty in man on all occasions. Pride and arrogance are the devil's offspring, and as such ought to be hated. When looking upon matrimonial alliances of the present day, and the manner of their consummation, it is to be feared that modesty is a commodity much undervalued.

Secondly: *In a confident spi-*

rit. The bride left her home and her country, believing the servant's report. When she saw Isaac, she had no reason to repent. Their future history proves that they placed the greatest confidence in one another. The family meets with many troubles and tempests from without, to cause enough pain, without inward strifes arising to increase it. When the garrison is all of one mind, and united, the foe can be kept at bay; when discord reigns within, the citadel lies at the mercy of the enemy. A suspicious and jealous spirit between husband and wife converts the home to a hell on earth.

Thirdly: *In a loving spirit.* "And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death." Love is the power that can harmonize and produce the sweetest melody from the discords of life. With this in the family, many privations can be endured without murmuring: the hurricane has swept away all the wrath, nothing remains in the house but the purest love between two fond hearts. With this they are far wealthier than their rich neighbours, where strife reigns; with this portion they begin life anew, and succeed. Love is a spark from heaven, to keep human hearts from being frozen by sin. Its

extinction would be the ruin of families, the death of society, and the chasm through which floods of darkness would come to our world, and drown for ever all that is lovely and Godlike on the earth.

In conclusion, I say—

First: Let the youth of our country study this history.

Secondly: May parents follow the example of Abraham.

Uckfield. CYMRO.

“THAT SIGHT.”*

“That sight.”—Luke xxiii. 48.

GREAT historical events are only fully and correctly seen from a distance. The larger their consequences, and the farther they extend, the longer they are, as a rule, in revealing themselves. This is pre-eminently true of the “sight” to which our text refers. Though it is already so remote that some would fain treat much connected with it as legendary, yet we are far from capable of realizing or perceiving its due significance as affecting the destinies of the entire human race. Even to us, however,—

I. “THAT SIGHT” PRESENTS A COMPREHENSIVE TYPICAL EXPRESSION OF HUMAN ANTAGONISM TO THE DIVINE WILL. Look at the *instigators*, and

the *actors* in that fearful scene.

(1.) On the one side we see almost every mean motive that may be used to sway a crowd wielded, without scruple, by those whose office it was to uphold and diffuse justice and mercy, goodness and truth. (2.) On the other hand we see wild passion stopping the mouth of justice, and the tumult of a rabid mob overriding every principle of truth and righteousness.

II. “THAT SIGHT” REVEALS JEHOVAH THWARTING THE PURPOSES AND REVERSING THE TENDENCIES OF THE MOST SUBTLE AND FURIOUS EXPRESSIONS OF HUMAN AND INTERNAL ENMITY. He caused these tendencies *to promote the exaltation of their victim, and (2.) Both to aid in accomplishing the highest welfare of mankind, and to advance the Divine Glory.* Other instances of this in sacred and profane history, but this the most prominent.

III. “THAT SIGHT” MAY BE REGARDED AS THE CENTRAL EXPRESSION IN ALL HISTORY OF THE EXERCISE OF DIVINE COMPASSION TOWARDS MAN. Who can comprehend the profound humiliation, the intense and exquisite agony of the Son of God, when, through “such contradiction of sinners against Himself,” “He endured the cross, despising the shame,” and “became sin for us”?! As we stand before this awful “sight,” what new force and significance do we perceive in such

* See *Genius of the Gospel* on Matt. xxvi. 47—xxvii. 56. Also “A Homily on Christ's Imprisonment,” *Homilist*, vol. xi. p. 169.

old texts as these:—"God so loved the world," &c. "God commendeth His love," &c.

IV. THAT SIGHT PRESENTS TO US MANY STRIKING REALITIES—(1.) *The culminating point in the fulfilment of Old Testament Prophecy concerning Christ, and* (2.) *The antitypical realization of the entire system of Patriarchal and Jewish sacrificial symbolism.*

V. "THAT SIGHT" SUPPLIES A KEY TO THE GRAND SECRET OF THE SPIRITUAL SUCCESS OF CHRISTIANITY THUS FAR. "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Here we see in their consummation—(1.) perfect subordination to the Divine Will; (2.) complete consecration to the Divine work; and (3.) unwearied endurance and self-sacrifice for the Divine glory.

VI. "THAT SIGHT" CONTAINS HEAVEN'S FORESHADOWING OF THE ULTIMATE VICTORY OF CHRISTIANITY OVER THE WORLD. The earth quaked, the rocks were rent, the veil of the temple was torn asunder, the dead were raised, one of the malefactors crucified with Him sought and obtained mercy at the Divine Victim's hands, and His murderers tremblingly acknowledged that "Truly this was the Son of God."

SAMUEL SLOCOMBE.

North Petherton, Somerset.

MEN UNDER DIVINE CONTROL-
MENT.

"I will instruct thee and teach

thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee."—Ps. xxxii. 8, 9.

ALL men are under the control of God, however good or however bad: the battling discords of hell as well as the loving harmonies of heaven. The text leads us to consider two things—

I. THE WAY WHICH ALL MEN SHOULD BE CONTROLLED BY GOD. "I will instruct thee and guide thee with mine eye." This implies that men *should be controlled*—

First: *Intelligently.* For His "eye" to guide us, we must have the power both to watch and interpret it. God guides planets by His arm, brutes by blind impulse, intelligences by His *look*. How much meaning there is often in the human eye—more than the richest vocabulary could express. How infinitely more is in the eye of God! All the lights of Nature and the Bible are but rays from that eye. This implies that men *should be controlled*—

Secondly: *Readily.* The mere look of the loving father is enough for the guidance of the child; it does not want words, still less blows. Men should not wait for God's thundering sentences from some Sinai to guide them; the mere look should be enough, the mere glance of His eye, the slightest intima-

tion of His will. The attitude of the soul should be, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" This implies that men *should be* controlled—

Thirdly: *Constantly*. The eye of God is everywhere. What was said of Canaan may be said of the whole universe, "This land doth the Lord care for, and the eyes of the Lord are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of it." His eye, says Melvill, gilds all that is beautiful, lights all darkness, prevents all danger, diffuses all happiness. His eye is thus ever on us. We have always the guide; we should always move by it. This is how all men should be guided by God, intelligently, readily, constantly. This is how the good both in heaven and on earth are ever guided. They have this, and require no written decalogue, no ponderous codes of law.

The text leads us to consider—

II. THE WAY WHICH SOME MEN ARE CONTROLLED BY GOD. "Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee." These words imply that some men under the control of God act—

First: *Irrationally*. Like the horse and the mule, they have no understanding: that

is, no understanding in relation to the right way of life. "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib." How ignorant, how thoughtless, are the great bulk of men in relation to God, duty, and destiny! The words imply, that some men under the control of God act—

Secondly: *Fractionally*. "Whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle." The horse and the mule, with the rider on their backs, determine to go at a pace and on a road contrary to the rider's wish; they throw their whole muscular energy into their will; they plunge, and prance, and foam, whilst their master holds them in. Thus it is with wicked men, they oppose God, they are determined to have their own way. But God holds them in by force. The words imply that some men under the control of God act—

Thirdly: *Dangerously*. "Lest they come near unto thee." "The admonition given," says Horsley, "by the Psalmist to his companions, is to submit to the instruction and guidance graciously promised from heaven, and not to resemble, in a refractory disposition, those ill-conditioned colts which are not to be governed by a simple bridle; but unless their jaws are confined by a muzzle will attack the rider as he attempts to mount, or the

groom as he leads them to the pasture and the stable." Wicked men are dangerous; they would ruin the world if God did not rein them in.

CHRIST THE GREAT DISCIPLINARIAN OF REGENERATE SOULS.

"And He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver. And He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness."—Malachi iii. 3.

"He shall sit." "He shall purify." Who? The context answers the question beyond debate or doubt. Christ, or the messenger of the Covenant, is He of whom the prophet speaks. The words lead us to look at Christ as the great disciplinarian of regenerate souls, for it is of regenerate souls he speaks. The "sons of Levi" were not only saints but priests—priests anointed of the Lord. All regenerate men are made priests, to offer to God spiritual sacrifices acceptable to Jesus Christ. Several things are suggested concerning Christ in this character:—

I. In this character He recognises THE WORTH OF REGENERATE SOULS. He treats them as "gold and silver," not as tin, or brass, or iron, still less as stones or clay, but as silver and gold. Christ knows the value of souls; He *created* them by His power. He *redeemed* them by His love. In the eye of Christ every

soul is of priceless value. "What shall it profit a man," says He, "if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" It is suggested that His work is to make them *even more valuable*. At first they are gold and silver, but not pure gold and silver, otherwise they would not require the refining of fire. As he burns up the dross of depravity the souls become more precious in His sight.

II. In this character He EMPLOYS PAINFUL INSTRUMENTALITIES. How does the refiner and purifier of silver and gold purge the metals of all the dross? By *fire*, and fire is painful. The "refining pot," says Solomon, "is for silver, and the furnace-pot for gold." This melting, scorching fire is the agent. What is the fire that Christ employs to refine and purify the human soul?

First: There is the fire of *truth*. "Is not my word as a fire." "I am come," said Christ, "that I may kindle a fire on the earth." That fire was the revelation of His truth.

Secondly: There is the fire of *the Spirit*. "He," said John, "shall baptize with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."

Thirdly: There is the fire of *trial*. There is the fire of personal and relative afflictions—the fire of persecution. As nothing can purify the gold and the silver but

fire, so nothing but the fire of truth and the Spirit of Providence can purge the human soul of all the dross of sin.

III. In this character He is PERMANENTLY ENGAGED. "He shall sit as a refiner and purifier." A correspondent, says Kitto, of the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1834, relates that a lady, apprehending there was something remarkable in the expression of the text, determined to call on a silversmith, and make inquiries of him, without naming her object. In answer to her inquiries, the process of silver-refining was fully explained to her. "But, Sir," said she, "do you sit while the work of refining is going on?" "O, yes, Madam," replied the silversmith; "I must sit, with my eye steadily fixed on the furnace, for if the time necessary for refining be exceeded in the slightest degree, the silver is sure to be injured!" At once, we are told, she saw the beauty, and comfort too, of the expression. As she was going, the silversmith called her back, to mention the further fact, that he only knew when the process of purifying was complete by seeing his own image reflected in the silver. Beautiful figure! When Christ sees His own image in His people His work of purifying is accomplished. This is an expressive idea of Christ's work in the world—

sitting down purifying souls. He does not do it in the mass. He has a crucible for each soul. He accommodates the fire to the necessity of the case and proportionates to the strength of every soul. This world is indeed a furnace, ever flaming for the purifying of God's moral silver and gold. The fire of Gospel truth, the fire of the Spirit's convictions, the fire of trying events burn on from age to age in every human heart.

IV. In this character He aims at the ENTIRE CONSECRATION TO GOD. "That they may offer unto God an offering of righteousness." The great work of every man is that of a priest. The work of priesthood is the one great work of souls. Man has "to offer to the Lord"—offer his affections, his faculties, his being, all he is and has, and to do all this in "righteousness." He has to render unto the Lord the glory due unto His name. To bring all souls into this state is the grand end of Christ's disciplinary work.

CONCLUSION. Endure the fire, welcome the fire, fan the fire, for the gold and the silver can only be purged of its dross by fire. "Count it all joy if ye fall into divers temptations, knowing this, that the trial of your faith worketh patience." "No chastening, for the present, is joyous, but grievous," &c.

Subject : MAN'S RELATION OF
SERVITUDE AND FRIENDSHIP
TO CHRIST COMPARED.

"Henceforth I call you not servants, . . . but I have called you friends."—John xv. 15.

THE whole human race may be divided into two classes, and these represented by the two words in the text, "servants" and "friends." All human beings have to do with Christ, and their service must be either that of slaves or of friends. Our Lord here intimates the superiority of the one relationship to the other, and the superiority will be obvious by comparing the relationships together.

I. The one is **LEGAL**, the other is **LOVING**. The master treats his slave, and the slave treats him, according to legal contract. The servant works by rule, and the master treats him accordingly; the slave lives and works in the letter of the contract, he goes not a step beyond it. But the service of the friend is irrespective of all prescriptive rules, of all legal arrangements. He does not feel himself to be under the law at all, and although he does more real hard work in the service of his friend than that of the slave in the employ of his master, he does it neither by enactment or law; love is his inspiration, and love is his law.

II. The one is **WATCHED**, the other is **TRUSTED**. The master keeps his eye upon the slave; he knows that he is

not the character to be trusted, he is a mere eye-servant. If the contracted work is to be done he is to be kept up to it by force. Not so with the friend; he is trusted, he is thrown upon his love, upon his honour, his sense of gratitude and justice. Thus Christ treats His disciples; He does not tell them how much to do, or how to do it. He trusts to their love, knowing that if they love Him they will keep His commandments. This is the true way to treat men—trust them. Thus Dr. Arnold treated his boys at Rugby, and thus all whom Providence has put in authority over men should treat their subordinates, in order to get from them the highest service they can render.

III. The one is **DISTANT**, the other is **NEAR**. The master keeps his servant at a distance, he stands on his authority, gives out his orders, and insists on their discharge. They live not only in different apartments, but in different mental worlds. Not so with the friend—the friend is near to the heart. An old philosopher defined friendship as the existence of two souls in one body. Thus near are Christ's disciples to Him. "The servant," He says, "knoweth not what his lord doeth, . . . but all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." How close and vital the connexion. "Shall

I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" said God.

IV. The one is *USED*, the other is *USING*. The master uses his slave, uses him as he does a piece of machinery; he has no tender interest in him. All he cares for is what benefits he can extract from his service, the slave is used—used as a beast of burden. But the friend is *using*. All his services, as a true friend, answer his own purpose, conduce to his own happiness of soul. He acts from love, and love, like the philosopher's stone, turns the commonest things into moral gold, to enrich his own heart. Thus it is with Christ's disciples: all their efforts to serve Him serve themselves. "All things are yours,"—life, death, &c. Everything turns to the real use of those who are the friends of Christ.

V. The one is *COERCED*, the other is *FREE*. The slave is not free in his work; he would not serve his master if he could help it. He is placed under considerations that force him to do his work. But the service of the friend is free, he would not but do what he does, and his desires to render service transcend his abilities. Thus it is with Christ's disciples. "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." The love of Christ constrains them; they welcome the slightest intimation of duty from their Lord.

CONCLUSION.—What is our relationship to Christ—that of servitude or friendship? All must serve Him, either *against* their will or *by* their will. The former is the condition of devils, the latter that of holy saints and blessed angels.



Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. CCC.)

Subject: HUMAN GOVERNMENT.

"My son, fear thou the Lord and the king; and meddle not with them that are given to change: for their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knoweth the ruin of them both?"—Prov. xxiv. 21, 22.

THE Bible everywhere recognises the existence of human governments. Indeed, it would be impossible for society to exist without laws, and these laws

must have their makers and administrators. The text may be taken as indicating that which human kings and human subjects should be. We infer from them—

I. THAT KINGS SHOULD BE GODLIKE. Solomon here exhorts his son "to fear the Lord and the king." He inculcates *reverence* towards both. The very fact that he requires the same

state of mind towards the king as he does towards Jehovah justifies the inference that the king which he recognises is Godlike. For the human soul can reverence nothing that is not Godlike, both in character and conduct. Falsehood, dishonesty, corruption, oppression—it is not in the heart of man to reverence these things.

First: *Kings should be Godlike in personal character.* Why is the Almighty to be revered? Because of His goodness, His moral perfections; and no being in the universe should be revered for any other reason. If a king is to be honoured, he must be honour worthy; if a king is to be revered, he should be morally great.

Secondly: *Kings should be Godlike in their kingly functions.* (1.) They should be impartial. God is no respecter of persons. Earthly rulers should hold an even balance, and deal out justice to the small as well as to the great. (2.) They should be generous. How patient, compassionate, tender, is the great God! He is slow to anger, and abundant in mercy. There is no vengeance in Him. An angry and revengeful king cannot be revered, ought not to be revered, were it possible to do so. (3.) They should be restorative. The great God's penal inflictions are not to crush the sinner, but his sin. "All these things worketh God oftentimes with man, to bring him back from the pit, that he may be enlightened with the light of the living." A human sovereign should act in the same way. Reformation and restoration should be his grand object in all punishment.

We infer from these words—

II. THAT SUBJECTS SHOULD BE CONSERVATIVE. "Meddle not with them, that are given to change." The Apostle speaks of those demagogues who, in his day, were found "walking after the flesh, despising governments, presumptuous, self-willed, not afraid to speak evil of dignities." Such men are found in all ages, and in all kingdoms—meddling demagogues. They have a passion for change, and for change they work, and generally with the view to bring themselves to note and power. It is the duty of every citizen to seek the correction of public abuses, the repeal of unjust laws, and the displacement of incompetent, and unrighteous officials. All that is in perfect harmony with true conservatism and is not against progress. True conservatism is that which retains with a death grasp the right and repudiates with heart earnestness the wrong. But revolutionism is often obstructive. There are men that are given to change, who have a feverish, restless passion for it, and these men are a curse to any country. "For their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knoweth the ruin of them both?" Korah and Absalom are examples of this.

(No. CCCL.)

Subject: SOCIAL CONDUCT.

"These things also belong to the wise. It is not good to have respect of persons in judgment. He that saith unto the wicked, Thou art righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him: But to them that rebuke him shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them. Every man shall kiss his lips that giveth a right answer."—Prov. xxiv. 23-26.

MAN is a social being. He lives

in society, by society, and should live for it. His fellow-men constitute the subject of a large amount of his every day thoughts, and the object of a large amount of his activities. There are three social acts in these verses—two are bad and the other is good.

I. Here is **PARTIALITY OF JUDGMENT**—that is *bad*. "It is not good to have respect of persons in judgment." Men are often called to arbitrate upon the conduct of their fellow-men. Disputes between their fellow-men are submitted to their decision. Whatever may be the subject of dispute, political, social, or ecclesiastical, they are bound by the laws of God to *impartiality* in their inquiries and conclusions. The disputants should be regarded not in any respect but in the merits or demerits of their case. The *question* and not the person, is to be respected in their judgments. The "respect of persons" is bad in *principle*, is an outrage of justice. It is bad in *influence*. It tends to social disorder and ill-feeling. The principle of impartiality is enjoined both in the Old and the New Testament. In the Old, "Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment; thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty; but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour."

In the New Testament we have these words, "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons," &c. James ii. 1-9. Weighty words are those of the great Hooker on this subject, "If they em-

ploy their labour and travail about the public administration of justice, follow it only as a trade, with unquenchable thirst of gain, being not in heart persuaded that justice is God's own work, and themselves His agents in this business, the sentence of right, God's own verdict, and themselves His priests to deliver it; formalities of justice do but serve to smother right; and that which was necessarily ordained for the common good is, through shameful abuse, made the cause of common misery."

II. Here is **FLATTERY OF THE WICKED**, which is *execrable*. "He that saith unto the wicked, Thou art righteous, him shall the people curse; nations shall abhor him." How often wicked men are treated both in actions and speech as if they were righteous. If the wicked man be great in wealth, exalted in social influence and political power, there is a wondrous tendency in all the grades below to flatter him as a "righteous man." A small amount of generosity in a secularly great man will transfigure him before the eyes of men as a great philanthropist. A few acts of formal piety will cause him to be regarded as an illustrious saint. This flattery is an accursed thing. It is abhorrent to the moral heart of humanity. The base flatterer the people shall accurse and the nations shall abhor. Flattery in all its forms is an accursed thing. It always implies *insincerity*. The sycophant does not mean what he says. He is belying his own conscience. It implies *vanity*. The flatterer looks for a return of his compliments with interest. "When

flatterers meet," says Defoe, "the devil goes to dinner." It always implies *servility*. Sycophancy is the child of a base nature. It is called a sneaking art.

"No flattery, boy. An honest man can't live by it. It is a little sneaking art, which knaves Use to cajole and soften fools withal. If thou hast flattery in thy nature out with't, Or send it to a court, for there 'twill thrive!"—*Otway*.

III. Here is REPROVING OF THE WRONG, which is *blessed*. "But to them that rebuke him shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them. Every man shall kiss his lips that giveth a right answer." It is truly a blessed thing to reprove the wrong wherever found, in pauper or in prince.

First: *There is a delight in such work.* "To them that rebuke him shall there be *delight*." What is the delight? The delight of an approving conscience. What delight is higher than this.

Secondly: *There is Divine favour in such work.* "A good blessing shall come upon you." God will express his favour to such a man in many ways. In temporal prosperity, in social happiness, in spiritual enjoyments.

Thirdly: *There is social approbation in such work.* "Every man shall kiss his lips that giveth the right answer." To kiss the lips is to pay the homage of love and respect. The man whose character is transparently truthful, honest, and generous towards his fellow-man, in whatever position of life he may be, will gain the homage and respect of every person.

"Every man will kiss his lips" — will render him homage. Our reproofs, however, whilst truthful, should be kind.

You have heard

"The fiction of the north-wind and the sun,
Both working on a traveller and con-
tending
Which had most power to take his
cloak from him;
Which, when the wind attempted, he
roared out
Outrageous blasts at him to force it
off,
Then wrapt it closer on; when the
calm sun
(The wind once leaving) charged him
with still beams,
Quiet and fervent, and therein was
content,
Which made him cast off both his
cloak and coat;
Like whom should men do."

Chapman.

(No. CCCII.)

Subject: HUMAN LABOUR.

"Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field, and afterwards build thine house."—Prov. xxiv. 27.

"A LARGE number," says a learned expositor, "of proverbial sentiments and maxims of practical wisdom, are to be found couched in terms taken from particular departments of life and business. Every one at all acquainted with even the ordinary, but frequently very terse and pithy proverbs of our own country, must be aware of this. It is so in the verse before us. The advice thus given to bring the lands into good heart, and make the estate productive before we lavish large expenditure upon the mansion, is clearly intended to convey a general lesson." The verse suggests two thoughts in relation to human labour:—

I. In all labour there should

be FORETHOUGHT. "Prepare thy work without," &c. Before you build the house make preparation. Get the place, collect the materials; see the way clear before you lay the first stone for the superstructure. This forethought is most important.

First: It is the best security against *waste*. How much waste time, energy, and money often occurs in an enterprise in consequence of not having well deliberated the whole before the commencement. Every part of an undertaking should be so well considered and weighed that in the execution no difficulty occurs that is not foreseen; no effort or expense demanded that had not been duly estimated. The man who acts from forethought will do thrice as much work, with less effort and anxiety, than the man who takes up an enterprise without due consideration.

Secondly: It is the best security against *failure*. Nearly all the enterprises that break down and whose wrecks are strewn in every department of human labour, owe their ruin to want of forethought. Unforeseen difficulties rise up one after another until they baffle and confound the worker. Hence our Saviour inculcates this principle of forethought. "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?"

II. In all labour the MOST IMPORTANT WORK SHOULD BE DONE FIRST. "Let those things," says Dr. Wardlaw, which are obviously most important and necessary be done *first*, and the less urgent afterwards. Let not a man *begin business* by building, and expensively furnishing a fine house. Let the land be first cultivated. Let your business, whatever its nature, be faithfully and diligently minded, and well established, as far as human industry can effect, or human foresight calculate. Be content, in the meantime, with inferior accommodation. There is an ambitious hasting to make little much, that is deeply reprehensible, because it is injurious to *others* as well as to the speculator himself. A man should have property well realized and secured, before he enters on schemes of expensive building. He must not with sanguine infatuation, appropriate the very first proceeds of his trade to the erection of a *palace to live in!*"

The most important of all works, it is generally admitted, is getting our spiritual natures in accord with the plan of the universe and the will of God; that is religion, or Christliness, which is a better word. "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto you."

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

THE NEW TESTAMENT, GREEK AND ENGLISH, IN PARALLEL COLUMNS, WITH VARIOUS READINGS. London: Samuel Bagster and Sons, 15 Paternoster Row.

THE text used in this edition is *Mill's*, which has been preferred as being that which is most current in this country. *Mill's* text is, in fact, a reprint of Stephens's third edition (folio 1550), with one correction, and a few unintentional changes, and this differs from *Elzevir* text in comparatively few places, and those of but small importance. The margin contains certain of the readings which have been adopted by Griesbach, Scholz, Lachmann, or Tischendorf; the abbreviations of the names of these critics (Gb. Sch. La. Tf.) are subjoined to the readings which they adopt. In selecting such various readings as would be suitable to place in the margin, the following plan has been adopted:—The endeavour has been to present—1st, Readings supported by great authority; 2nd, Readings worthy of special attention; 3rd, Readings which appreciably affect the sense; 4th, Readings to which reference is often made; 5th, Readings to which some peculiar importance has been attached. As Griesbach employs marks to indicate his opinion of the degrees of probability in favour of a reading or the contrary, similar marks have been used where “any reading stands in the margin of this edition, of which he has thus expressed his judgment in his manual edition (Leipsic, 1805).” The English translation is the Authorized Version. The work is, of course, one of great intrinsic value, and Biblical students will hasten to procure it.

THE WITNESS OF ST. JOHN TO CHRIST, BEING THE BOYLE LECTURES FOR 1870. By the Rev. STANLEY LEATHES, M.A. Rivingtons; London, Oxford, and Cambridge.

“I HAVE,” says the author, “tried, in these Lectures, to take a common-sense view of the most extreme position in which a school of modern criticism has endeavoured to place the Gospel of St. John. Even supposing that position could be established as correct, it would not by any means follow that the deadly blow had been struck at our received

Christianity, which some apprehend and others would have us believe. If, indeed, we start with certain foregone conclusions about the nature of inspiration, it may be fatal to any such notions to find one of the conditions unfulfilled, without which the idea of inspiration, properly so-called, in the mind of the person forging, would surely not be possible. And yet this must be the case, if it could be proved or shown to be highly probable, that the Gospel of St. John, as an inspired production, had been written in the middle or latter half of the second century." This volume is a most seasonable one, for the historic character of St. John's Gospel is doubted by some and denied by others. Professor Leathes' Lectures are very able, his arguments are conceived in a truly philosophic spirit, and wrought out with great clearness and force. The celebrated "Boyle Lectures" will not have a more valuable volume by their side than this. It is a priceless contribution to the apologetic theology of England.

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS IN THE LIFE OF KING DAVID. By CHARLES VINCE.
London: Elliot Stock, 62 Paternoster Row.

"ONE of the best methods of defending the historical use of the Testament," says the author, "is to use them diligently for practical purposes." In this we heartily agree. This volume is a practical treatment of certain leading facts in the history of David. The leading subjects of this book are—The Two Victories in one day—Divine Goodness in Human Friendship—Vengeance left with Him to whom it belongs—Nabal, the Churl—Divine Correction of a Prophet's Mistake, and Divine Denial of a King's Desire—Great Troubles following Great Transgressions—The Quickening of David's Conscience by Rizpah's Example—The Two Things which David had never seen—The Last Words of David. Mr. Vince has treated these subjects in a superior manner, and for a high purpose. The book has no attempt at fine writing, no gaudy grandeur of expression. It is clear as crystal, and pointed as an arrow.

TREATISE ON THE PHYSICAL CAUSE OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST. By WILLIAM STROUD, M.D., with an Appendix and Letter by Sir JAMES Y. SIMPSON, Bart., M.D. London: Hamilton, Adams, & Co.

DR. WILLIAM STROUD, the author of the following work on *The Physical Cause of the Death of Christ*, was a highly accomplished and remarkable man. He was a licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians, London, "and continued," says Dr. Hodgkin, "to grace that section of the Doctors of Medicine in the Metropolis, until his death." This work of his has long occupied a high place in our theological literature. No one could have written such a work who did not possess a combination of rare endowments, acquired a profound acquaintance with medical subjects and medical literature, a thorough knowledge of Biblical history and theological truth, and a deep reverence for Christ and His Gospel. In

Dr. Stroud all these conditions met in a pre-eminent degree. The celebrated Sir James Simpson, of Edinburgh—no mean authority—said of this work, in a letter to Dr. Hanna—"Ever since reading, some ten or twelve years ago, Dr. Stroud's remarkable treatise on *The Physical Cause of the Death of Christ*, I have been strongly impressed with the belief that the views which he adopted and maintained on this subject are fundamentally correct. Nor has that opinion been in any way altered by a perusal of some later observations, published on the same question, both here and on the Continent. That the immediate cause of the death of our blessed Saviour was—speaking medically—laceration, or rupture of the heart, is a doctrine in regard to which there can be no absolute certainty; but, assuredly, in favour of it there is a very high amount of *circumstantial probability*."

THE PRACTICAL MORAL LESSON BOOK. Edited by the Rev. CHARLES HOLE, F.R.G.S. Books i. and ii. Duties concerning the Body and Duties concerning the Mind. London: Longmans, Green and Co.

THESE are valuable little volumes. They show that the author understands human nature, and the best methods for enlightening its intellect, purifying its affections, and harmoniously and vigorously developing its various faculties and powers. They are interesting, full of anecdote and maxim, and contain many fine extracts from our greatest authors.

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY: SELECTIONS OF THE MOST IMPORTANT WRITINGS OF REV. JOHN WESLEY, A.M. With Biographical Sketch by Rev. THORNLEY SMITH. London: William Legg.

MOST of our readers, we presume, are acquainted with the theological doctrines of the famous John Wesley. Mr. Smith has here done good service in bringing them into systematic order, and within a small compass. The book also contains a well-written biographic sketch of Mr. Wesley. It is short, but long enough to secure a reading right through and thoughtfully.

EMMANUEL CHURCH. By R. THOMAS, M.A. London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co.

THIS book is a very graphic and beautiful delineation of the best of our modern Nonconformist Churches, which, thank God, have some noble Le Beaus and Browns as deacons, as well as miserable Johnsons. The book is admirable in conception, and worked out with great artistic power and finish. It is worthy of extensive circulation amongst the Churches of Great Britain. There is more beauty and grandeur in the creation of the characters and the description of the events than can be set forth by anything which we can write. Read the book to know it, and it will reward you. The book is an entirely new creation.

THE PEACEMAKER ; OR THE RELIGION OF JESUS CHRIST IN HIS OWN WORDS.
By Rev. ROBERT AINSLIE. London : Longman, Green, and Co.

POPE PIUS IX., in his reply to the address from the foreign visitors at Rome, uttered the following words—words worthy of the most Catholic hearted Christian in Christendom, and commanding the attention of all : “CHRIST IS TRUTH. AND IT IS THE DUTY OF ALL CHRISTIANS, in whatever state of life, to maintain the TRUTHS WHICH HE HAS TAUGHT. THIS MUST BE YOUR INDIVIDUAL LINE OF ACTION IN YOUR DIFFERENT COUNTRIES.” And Mr. Ainslie, in this admirable little volume, says, “If Christians would universally receive and obey the teaching of Jesus on these subjects, what a different aspect would Christianity present to mankind, and how great would be its power over all who bear the Christian name.” This little book contains all the well authenticated words of Christ, and His words constitute the genuine Christian creed and code of obligations. This is a priceless little volume and we heartily thank Mr. Ainslie for it.

THE WISDOM OF THE KING, OR STUDIES IN ECCLESIASTES. By REV. JAMES BENNET. Edinburgh : William Oliphant & Co. ”

THE author informs us that this volume is the result of certain preparations made for an evening lecture to his own congregation, and that the discourses were published in numbers as they appeared in the *Presbyterian Advocate*. The volume is not an unworthy companion of the work of Dr. Buchanan on the same book. Nothing is so interesting to man as man’s own history, and the Book of Ecclesiastes is full of human life—human thinkings, anxieties, and complicated experiences. Mr. Bennet here brings out many of the deep, touching, and practical things contained in this wonderful book.

LIFE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT. By REV. GEORGE GILFILLAN. Edinburgh : William Oliphant & Co.

THE many biographic sketches of Sir Walter Scott, now extant, do not supersede the desirableness of a sketch from the graphic pen of Mr. Gilfillan. No man in these realms possesses higher qualifications for faithfully portraying the mental attributes and literary achievements of the world-renowned Scotch novelist than he. Mr. Gilfillan tells us that he has sought in this book to produce something between the large work of Lockhart and the slighter biographies, and that it contains some facts not found elsewhere. As the celebration of Sir Walter Scott’s centenary is about breaking upon us, this work is a very seasonable remembrancer of his characteristics as a man, and his productions as an author. “The evil,” says Shakespere, “that men do lives after them ; the good is oft interred with their bones.” It has been otherwise, says our Author with Scott. “Whatever was small and narrow in his history and opinions is forgotten. His real nature, which was as broad and Catholic as the sun, remains with us, and is still powerfully affecting the world.”



A HOMILY

ON

Former Mercies.

A WELSH SERMON, TRANSLATED BY THE AUTHOR.

“Where are thy former mercies?”*—Ps. lxxxix. 49.

FORMER.—There are many things connected with the past, that have been allowed to sink gradually into oblivion, without our giving them more than a passing thought. Many corrupt practices and vicious habits, once so flourishing, are left to moulder in the dust, without the least desire on our part for their revival—without a single inquiry being instituted concerning them. There are others again, the loss of which affect us deeply, and to the memory of which our hearts will cling with a tenderness that time cannot lessen, and with a tenacity of grasp which nought but death can sever. We grieve to see many of the simple religious practices of our forefathers put aside to make room for others of more modern times. We mourn the loss out of our Hymn Books of many of those simple songs of Zion, which were wont to be sung to many a sweet and soul-stirring melody, now no longer heard.

* Welsh version.

But of all the things of the past, those which interest us most, whose loss we can the least afford, and whose continuance we most fear, are the former mercies. *Mercies.*—Correctly speaking, we should not say *mercies*, but *mercy*; because mercy, which may be defined as that tendency in the Divine mind to extend goodness to—to confer benefits upon—a miserable creature, is not compound, but singular, as an attribute of the Divine Being. We are in the habit of calling health a mercy, and of designating the gifts of Providence and of Grace as mercies, while in reality they are but the *effects* of mercy. In a manner of speaking, we have been taught, out of respect for Mercy, to call by its name the many benefits it confers upon us. And, though her gifts are many and varied, mercy is singular; there is but one source, though its streams are numerous—the root is single, while the branches are innumerable.

The active operations of Mercy are confined to this world and to this alone; it is here that she acts, and her work will be accomplished here. We are often reminded of three great days: the day of Justice—the day of Mercy—and the day of Wrath. The day of Justice is past; its demands were settled on Calvary; the day of Wrath is yet to come; while this present time is the day of Mercy. And it is of the utmost importance to seek Mercy in its day; myriads who now despise it will frantically implore for a moment's time to turn to Mercy in the day of wrath, but it will then be too late.

Though its work will be accomplished in this world, Mercy will be in Heaven; there its trophies will be displayed, to be admired and to be wondered at. What a mournful interest do parents take in exhibiting the handiwork of their departed children! “This,” says the father, “this is the work of my dear boy; the hands that formed it are now powerless, but I love to look at it for his sake.” How reverently does the mother point to the needlework of her

darling, carefully framed and suspended in the best room, out of regard for the memory of that dear one, who is now no more! In a manner of speaking, such a *best room* will Heaven be, in which will be kept and exhibited the work of Mercy; the saints will be brought into "the presence of the King, in raiments of needlework" of Mercy's doing; while God—who is the Father of Mercy—delights in pointing out and contemplating her work to eternity.

It is probable that the Psalmist here refers to some special manifestation of God's mercy, vouchsafed him in a season of past dangers and troubles, which being brought to his recollection in this, his present calamity, he is encouraged to pray for a like deliverance. It comforted him to remember God "from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill of Misar." The recollection of former deliverances is a great help in praying for a rescue from present evils. Or, it may be that he was inquiring for those mercies which God had promised him; and this was a still greater source of confidence. "Which thou swearest unto David in thy truth."

The Christian Church may with propriety adopt the inquiry, "Lord, where are Thy former mercies?" Let us consider—

I. THE CONTENTS OF THE INQUIRY.—First: *It implies a former acquaintance.*—The fact of such an inquiry being made argues an acquaintance, either personal, or by report, between the inquirer and the object sought for. And in the words of our text there is that sound of old, sweet intercourse, as if one were inquiring for an old friend, "Where is he?" Can Zion claim any acquaintance with these former mercies? Ah yes! she remembers a season when she was powerful to accomplish great things, when the "right hand of the Lord was exalted, when the right hand of the Lord did valiantly," causing the "voice of rejoic-

ing and salvation to be heard in the tabernacles of the righteous." Then was she a "joyful mother of children," singing as she nursed them—her experience flourishing, "peace within her walls, and prosperity within her palaces." Then did the Lord perform marvellous things in Zion, and terrible things in the sight of sinners. At that time, the streams of the river which make glad the city of God overflowed their banks, while the peace of Zion was as a river, and its righteousness as the waves of the sea. Then indeed was Zion the "joy of the whole earth." "Where are Thy former mercies?"

Secondly : *It implies an imagined temporary cessation of intercourse.*—There is no need of seeking for that which is in sight, neither do we inquire for one who is with us. But Zion, in many places, seems as if unable to see Mercy, and is ready to exclaim, "The Lord hath forsaken me, my Lord hath forgotten me." "I will say unto God my rock, Why hast Thou forgotten me? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? as with a sword in my bones, my enemies reproach me, while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God?" Zion remembers a time when none of her enemies could thus reproach her; her God was then so manifest as that she could exclaim exultingly, "Behold my God!" Nothing grieves her so much as that her enemies should contemptuously cry, "Where is He?" while she is unable to answer; at those times the inquiry pierces her heart as a sharp pointed sword. When the Lord speaks to us—and we cannot be insensible to the fact that He *does* speak—He is addressing us as it were out of the deep obscurity, He keeps himself veiled from our sight. But He was at one time so manifest as that nought but mercy met our view; mercy alone was in the front, while all else had withdrawn into the back-ground.

Thirdly : *It exhibits an ardent desire for a renewal of the intercourse.*—Is not this the complaint of many, "I have

considered the days of old, the years of ancient times. I call to remembrance my song in the night, I commune with mine own heart, and my spirit made diligent search. Will the Lord cast off for ever, and will He be favourable no more? Is His mercy clean gone for ever? Doth His promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies? How long, Lord? Wilt thou hide Thyself for ever? Shall Thy wrath burn like fire? I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God: with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday." An intense longing for the time when the Lord's presence was with His people fills his heart; his soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord as they then were. "Wilt Thou be angry with us for ever? Wilt Thou draw out Thine anger to all generations? Wilt Thou not revive us again, that Thy people may rejoice in thee? Show us thy mercy, O Lord."

Fourthly: *It breathes a spirit of sincerity.*—There are many that complain to men; but there is little ground to hope for the sincerity of the feeling which does not lead one to confide his sorrows to God. The conduct of some men betrays rather a spirit of repining than a sincere longing; they are unceasingly complaining, murmuring, and disaffected—a state of feeling that is an abomination to the Lord. He takes it unkind that men should be continually murmuring amongst themselves against Him. As a rule, those who speak most to men of the ill success of God's work, and the degeneracy of the times, have the least to say to God on the subject. Many are influenced by a spirit far from being that of "wisdom" in saying, "What is the cause that the former days were better than these?" It is to God that we should carry these feelings; and he who confides most to God complains least to men; for when the Lord recognises a real solicitude for the welfare

of His cause, that feeling is specially rewarded, so that there can be no ground for complaint. That which the Christian receives from God, in answer to his prayer, fills him with such a sense of gratitude as to confine him entirely to tones of praise in speaking of his God to his fellow creatures. This is indeed a sincere feeling—a feeling confided to God.

II. THE CHEERING REPLIES TO THE INQUIRY. First: *Mercy still exists.*—How often, in answer to an affectionate inquiry for some old and cherished friend of our youth, do we receive the mournful reply, uttered in accents of sorrow, “He is no more!” But we are glad to be able to inform any and all who inquire for Mercy, that *she still exists*. Many of her former gifts are now no more; many of the instruments by whose means in former days she performed mighty deeds have been laid aside; many of her former messengers to you have become silent in death; their forms will never more be seen amongst you, and their voices are for ever hushed. “Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live for ever?” No: a race that some of you still remember have passed away. But Mercy is still alive. It may be that many a confirmed sinner may doubt this when he calls to remembrance the cruel treatment she received at his hands. Long and persistently did he contend with her; often was she trampled under his feet; it is probable that she has departed from many a one with her blood gushing out of wounds that he had inflicted. Oh, it gives us pleasure to be able assure the most hard-hearted sinner, that his many and fierce thrusts have not proved fatal—that they have hitherto failed to slay her. If thou desirest ought of her, *she is still alive!* Many a one has been brought to the grave by conduct less ungrateful, by treatment less contemptuous, than Mercy received at the hands of that sinner. He has abused her precious

gifts; he has wasted her substance; he has rejected her, and “forsaken his own mercy,” observing rather “lying vanities.” But notwithstanding all this, she is alive; and whilst thou and she still exist, there is yet hope for thee!

Secondly: *She is still at her old place of abode—at home.*—We are able to furnish all particulars as to her whereabouts, and can give her full address—“There is Mercy with the Lord.” That is her abode, and it is better for us that she resides there than if she were lodged with parent, child, or any earthly friend. She is with the Lord, and is always to be found at home. See the humble suitor as he leaves his lowly home, directing his steps to the princely mansion of the nobleman, there to prefer his complaint, or it may be, to seek a favour. His heart is bounding high with hope, and bright visions of a happy future give elasticity to his step, while his countenance is radiant with anticipation: his heart fluttering with expectation, he approaches the house; he knocks timidly, and anxiously does he await the answer to his summons. The door opens, and in faltering accents he proceeds to tell his tale to the domestic, when that functionary unceremoniously interrupts him with a chilling “*Not at home!*” Slowly and silently he retraces his steps, his face sad, and his form for the moment bent, as if unable to bear the weight of his disappointment. But Mercy is ever at home. Some have sought her at very unseasonable hours, and at times seemingly most unpropitious, but none returned unsuccessful. One ventured to approach her door while his hands were still reeking with her blood! yet he knocked; and hear him, as, in astonishment, he publishes the result: “I obtained mercy!” She came to me. Mercy was at home, and Mercy ministered unto me! Consequently none need despair.

Thirdly: *She is still in the possession of all her faculties.*—All her powers are unimpaired. In reply to our inquiries

for many an able and gifted young man, we are told that he is *alive*, and *at home*, but that his health is impaired; that he is no longer able to follow his calling. The arm that wielded the hammer has become powerless; the hand that gave life to the canvas is no longer able to hold the pencil. And his neighbours add, sorrowfully, "Alas! he is of no further use; he will never perform another day's work!" But Mercy is still at home, and all her powers are undiminished. Her capacities were at no time stronger than they now are. She would not shrink from a contract for raising three thousand souls in a day from the dung-hill. She would meet, undismayed, a second Saul of Tarsus. She would not hesitate to attempt a second edition of the foul Corinthians. She is in as good a trim for work now as ever. Zion need not fear to cut out too much work for her. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him." We are glad to think that she has sufficient vigour and strength of arm for the hardest undertaking, while she retains a firmness of hand and delicacy of touch for the most intricate work.

Fourthly: *She is still equally well disposed towards you.*—How do we know that? A message has arrived from her; not a day passes but that she communicates with this world, and not a single letter from her has arrived since you have been here, but she inquires for you, and desires to be remembered to you. She sends many presents in hopes of gaining your heart; that is the object of all her gifts. She cannot be offended while she continues to hold communication with you. When she becomes offended she drops the correspondence. She holds no communication with Hell; but she feels a deep interest in all who are this side of that awful place of torment. Oh, what a number of her kind letters are left unopened by many!

Sad will be the task of breaking the seals and of perusing them by the flames of retribution ! It is thus that many read her letters to them for the first time, and find in many of them such pressing offers of salvation, when it will be too late to profit by them. Men and brethren, break the seals, that you may see how reasonable are the offers she there makes to you. The continual silence with which you meet her many overtures is an act of discourtesy most unpardonable. Return the answer, at least *once* !

III. PROBABLE RESULTS OF AN INQUIRY MADE IN A PROPER SPIRIT.

First : *It will gain the Divine approbation.*—Parents are pleased to hear inquiries made concerning their children. Now, God is the “Father of Mercies,” and He “delighteth in mercy ;” indeed we may say that she, of all His children, is His pet—He delights to hear her name. And the most effectual way to gain His favour, is to make frequent inquiries for her. We have, in the New Testament, a full account of the correspondence between two of the children of this earth and the Father of Mercies. The production of one was faultless as to composition, the thoughts were set forth in fine language, and the whole bore the stamp of being the work of a master-hand. But it was concluded without the least allusion to Mercy. The petition of the other exhibited none of these signs of excellence, but at the foot, he humbly mentioned Mercy’s name : this touched the heart of the Father, and the petitioner’s request was immediately granted. The whole communication was simply this, “God be merciful to me a sinner.” And had it not been for his happy mention of Mercy, this man had returned to his house as the other is said to have gone.

Secondly : *Every probability of a renewal of the intercourse.*—Were the Lord but to turn to Mercy, and inform

her that kind inquiries for her had arrived from a certain spot on earth, it is most probable that Mercy would soon be on her way thither. Indeed it is to be feared that the fact of there being so little mention made of her, in many places, will account for her being so often lost to sight. Oh, when Zion is brought to feel a sincere longing for the "former mercies" which operated so powerfully in the days of old, in months past, it may be said "Thou shalt arise, and have *mercy* upon Zion, for the time to favour her, yea, the set time is come. For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof."

Carnarvon.

DAVID ROBERTS.

—o—

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

OUR PURPOSE.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this *TEHILM*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough HOMILETIC treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

OUR METHOD.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1.) The HISTORY of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words, is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) ANNOTATIONS of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The ARGUMENT of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The HOMILETICS of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonizing methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

Subject: A SOCIETY STRONGLY DEPRECATED.

"Draw me not away with the wicked,
And with the workers of iniquity,
Which speak peace to their neighbours,
But mischief is in their hearts."—Ps. xxviii. 3.

HISTORY.—See page 204.

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver. 3.*—"Draw me not away with the wicked." Professor Leigh reads, "Reckon me not." This language is parallel to Psalm xxvi. 9, on which see our notes. The word 'wicked' etymologically signifies to decline, or to fall away. Wickedness is an apostasy, and this comprehends all sin. The wicked, in this verse, are represented as "*workers of iniquity.*" Wickedness is not a mere condition, it is a conduct. Wicked men are active, and they are active in unrighteousness. They are represented here also as hypocritical: "*Which speak peace to their neighbours, but mischief is in their hearts.*" They speak honey, but feel gall. They have the devil in their heart, but the angel on their lip. They cover their malice with the robe of kindness.

ARGUMENT.—See page 205.

HOMILETICS.—This verse is a strong prayer against identification with ungodly men. "Draw me not away," &c. He would have expressed himself more correctly to the Almighty if he had said, "Prevent me from falling into the society of the wicked;" for Jehovah never draws men into such companionship. Permit me not to be drawn; this is the idea.

The text leads us to consider three things:—

I. The CHARACTER of ungodly society.

First: They are *apostates*. This is the meaning of the word "wicked." They have gone away from truth, virtue, and God. They have forsaken God, the Fountain of living waters. They are "without God."

Secondly: They are *rebels*. "Workers of iniquity." They are always doing the wrong, wrong in relation to their own nature, to society, and to God. Sinners are busy workers. The devil has no drones; his service is no sinecure.

Thirdly: They are *hypocrites*. "Which speak peace to their neighbours, but mischief is in their hearts." Wicked men are almost *necessarily* hypocrites. Did a wicked man really show to society all the vileness of his heart, he would be shunned with abhorrence, and denounced without mercy; to live in and by society, he must be a hypocrite.

Such is the society which David deprecates, and from which he seems to recoil with horror. Such a society is, alas! the great society of this earth; it is so large, that it is called

the *world* in the New Testament. "It lieth in the wicked" one, says John. The text leads us to consider—

II. The ATTRACTIVENESS of ungodly society. The prayer implies that David felt a power drawing him into this foul fellowship; and such fellowship has an attractive power, even to the best of men on this earth. Christ recognised this, when He said, "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but Thou shouldest keep them from the evil of the world." In what does its attraction consist?

First: In its *numerical force*. It is the largest society on the earth. There is a wonderful power in numbers. This society in the world is a morally magnetic mountain, attracting the gregarious steel of our hearts to itself. As the little spring from the mountain is drawn to the river, individuals are drawn to the multitude. The attraction consists—

Secondly: In its *social resources*. The ungodly society, being the great society in the world, has at its command not only most of the means of human subsistence, but most of the means for secular advancement, and artistic gratification. It has the prizes of fortune and the delights of pleasure at its disposal. All this is attractive. Why should these things be attractive to a good man? Simply, because his goodness is not perfect; remnants of depravity are still in his heart, and these incline him thitherward. To a thoroughly pure soul the power of ungodly society is repulsion, not attraction. Ungodly society had no drawing force with Christ; "The Prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me."

The text leads us to consider—

III. The BANEFULNESS of ungodly society. David evidently apprehended evil from being drawn into such society.

First: This society is *detrimental to the higher interests of human nature*. It may enrich our coffers, it may gratify our senses, it may promote our interests as citizens of time, but it is ruin to the soul of all. It cannot appease a guilty conscience, it cannot cleanse a polluted heart. It cannot bring to the soul those spiritual blessings for which it craves, and without which it must be miserable for ever. Nay,

instead of doing this, it does the reverse; it enhances the guilt, it deepens the pollution, it obstructs the entrance of that good, for which the soul craves, as for its life.

Secondly: This society is *doomed to ruin*. Doomed by the moral constitution of the universe; doomed by the express Word of God. "Gather not, my soul, therefore, with sinners." Who would be gathered with the sinners in the great world of retribution? Who would spend their eternity with the Herods, the Neros, and the Napoleons of the world? Even bad men pray against it. Balaam exclaimed, "Let me die the death of the righteous."



Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Job.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of great scholarly and critical worth; such as Drs. Barnes, Wemyss, Mason Goode, Noyes Lee, and Herman Hedwick Bernard: the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering: but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in an order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.



Subject: GENUINE FRIENDSHIP.

"Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite; for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him. And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven. So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great."—Job ii. 11-13.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS. *Ver. 11.*—"Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place." These three friends, whose names are given in the next clause, were, in all probability, the patriarch's most particular friends. Elsewhere in the book we are given to understand that his admiring and grateful acquaintances were numerous. A man of his high intellectual power; deep, tender, and practical philanthropy; high social influence and affluent means, could scarcely fail to gather around him a large number of attached friends; but these "three" were *special*—hence they came to visit Job in his deep affliction. How they "heard of all this evil" we are not told. There were no postal communications in those days, but in all societies ill news has swift pinions. They come together, we are told, by pre-appointment; each left his own house and started on his mission. "*Eliphaz the Temanite.*" From the fact that he seems to take the lead in nearly all the conversations of the book, and the others to have followed and sustained his propositions, we may infer that he was the most influential man and the oldest friend. The name signifies "*My God's strength,*" and his parents, in all probability, were religious people. He is called the Temanite, perhaps because he was a native of Teman, a country of Idumea, settled by one of the descendants of Esau. (Gen. xxxvi. 10; comp. Jer. xlix. 7, 20; Ezek. xxv. 13; Amos i. 11, 12; Obad. i. 8, 9.) "*Bildad the Shuhite.*" It is supposed that he was a descendant from Shuhah, a son of Abraham by Keturah. This Shuhah is the only person to whom we can trace the denomination of Shuhite. (Gen. xxv. 2). "*And Zophar the Naamathite.*" "Naamah, from which Naamathite is derived, was a town mentioned in Josh. xv. 41, in a list of the uttermost cities of Judah's lot, 'toward the coast of Edom southward.' (ver. 21). It is, further, among that portion of those towns that lay 'in the valley,' which is supposed to have been Petra. Naamah was probably, therefore, in or near the Ghor, or valley, which extends from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Akabah."—*Kitto*. The residences of these three friends render it probable that the scene of this book was laid in the land of Edom. "*For they had made an appointment together, to come to mourn with him, and to comfort him.*" The fact that they "made an appointment" to visit Job indicates that they did not live far apart; and the fact that they came to mourn with him and to comfort him shows that the strong reproaches which they afterwards addressed to him never entered into their purpose at first.

Ver. 12.—"And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not." His terrible afflictions had so transfigured him that his friends could not recognise him. "From our being told here," says Dr. Bernard, "that his friends lifted up their eyes from afar, and did not recognise him, together with the fact that he was sitting amidst ashes, we may fairly conclude that Job had taken up his seat in the open air: and there the reader will do well to imagine he continued during the whole time occupied by the events recorded in this book; as thereby, will not

only the grandeur of the description given in the latter chapters of this book, of the phenomena of nature, and of the approach of the whirlwind, from which God addresses Job, be greatly enhanced; but also some passages be cleared up which might otherwise seem obscure." "They lifted up their voice and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven." Here we have a natural and a conventional way of showing grief; the natural way is by tears—they "wept." It is natural, the world over and the ages through, for sorrow to flow forth in tears. But the rending of the mantle and the sprinkling of dust on their heads toward heaven seem to have been acts of fashion or custom among the Ancients. (Josh. vii. 6; 1 Sam. iv. 12; Ezek. xxvii. 30; Acts xxii. 23). "This custom," says a modern expositor, "resembles in a remarkable manner the mode in which Achilles gave utterance to his sorrow when informed of the death of Patroclus."—ILLIAD xviii. 21-27.

"A sudden horror shot through all the chief,
And wrapp'd his senses in the cloud of grief;
Cast on the ground, with furious hand he spread
The scorching ashes o'er his graceful head.
His purple garments and his golden hairs—
Those he deforms with dust, and these he tears;
On the hard soil his groaning breast he threw,
And roll'd and grovell'd as to earth he grew."—Pope.

Jer. 13.—"So they sat down with him seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him." "They did not remain in the one posture and without food &c. all this time, but for the most of this period daily and nightly. Sitting on the earth marked mourning. (Lam. ii. 10). Seven days was the usual length of it. (Gen. 1. 10; 1 Sam. xxxi. 13). This silence may have been due to a rising suspicion of evil in Job; but chiefly because it is only ordinary griefs that find vent in language—extraordinary griefs are too great for utterance."—A. R. Fausset.

HOMILETICS.—This record of the visit of these three friends to Job suggests a few of the leading features of *genuine friendship*.

I. It was DEEPENED BY ADVERSITY.—The effect on their minds of the overwhelming calamities which overtook Job, was not to *drive* them from him, but to *draw* them to him. When "they heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place." His afflictions so roused and intensified their affections, that they left their homes and hastened to his presence. Adversity is one of the best tests for friendship. The Germans have a proverb "Let

the guests go before the storm bursts." False friends forsake in adversity. When the tree is gay in summer beauty, and rich in aroma, bees will crowd around it and make music amongst its branches; but when the flower has fallen, and the honey has been exhausted, they will pass it by, and avoid it in their aerial journeys. When your house is covered with sunshine, birds will chirp at your windows, but in the cloud and the storm their notes are not heard—such bees and birds are types of *false* friends. Not so with true friendship; it comes to you when your tree of prosperity has withered; when your house is shadowed by the cloud and beaten by the storm. "True friends," says an old writer, "visit us in prosperity only when invited, but in adversity they come to us without invitation." I have seen an oak-tree, once the ornament of the forest, leafless, blanched, dead; but the ivy that had clung to it in its better days seemed to clasp it more tenaciously in its decay as if so to cover every branch with its own beauty as to conceal the wrinkles and deformities that time had made. This is true friendship.

"When true friends meet in adverse hour,
 'Tis like a sunbeam through a shower;
 A watery ray an instant seen,
 The darkly closing clouds between."—*Sir Walter Scott.*

In this respect, Christ is the highest manifestation of genuine friendship. He came down from His own bright heavens because of our adversity. "He came to seek and to save the lost," &c. Another thought suggested concerning genuine friendship is—

II. IT WAS PROMPTED TO RELIEVING LABOUR.—The friendship of these men was not a passing sentiment, an evanescent emotion, it was a working force; it set them to—

First: A *self-denying work*. They left their homes and directed their footsteps to the scene of their afflicted friend. We know not the exact distance they had to travel; it was probably a long journey, otherwise it was not likely they would have made an appointment to travel together.' Travelling, too, in those days meant something more than it does in

these times, when means of transit are so accessible, agreeable, and swift. And then, no doubt, it required not a little self-denying effort to break away from their homes, their numerous associations, and the avocations of their daily life. Their friendship meant *self-denying* effort. This is always a characteristic of genuine friendship—spurious friendships abound in talk and evaporate in sighs and tears; it has no work in it. As a rule, it is not the man whose affection for you is the most garrulous, and whose words are the most glozing, that you can trust; the stronger and deeper the love a man has for you, the more modest and mute. It set them to—

Secondly: A self-denying work *in order to relieve*. They “came to mourn with him and to comfort him.” Man can comfort man. The expressions of true sympathy are balm to a wounded heart, and courage to a fainting soul. They have often broken in as sunbeams through the black clouds of sorrow, under which the spirit had quivered and quailed. These men did not come to pay Job a complimentary visit; address to him a few flattering words, and then depart; they “came to mourn with him and to comfort him.”

In this feature of genuine friendship Christ was again transcendent. “He came to preach deliverance to the captive—to open the prison door to them that are bound—to bind up the broken-hearted,” &c.

Another thought suggested concerning genuine friendship is—

III. It was VICARIOUSLY AFFLICTED. “And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice and wept: and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven.” If this language means anything, it means *soul suffering*. The very sight of their friend’s overwhelming afflictions harrowed their hearts. We are so constituted that the personal sufferings of our friend can bring sufferings to our heart as great, and often greater. What is the pain endured by the child with the burning fever on it, compared with the agonizing distress of its mother’s heart? The more love we have in us, the more

vicarious suffering we endure, in scenes where sufferings abound.

In this respect again the friendship of Christ excels all others. In all our afflictions He is afflicted. So great was the Divine love within Him, that "He bore our griefs and carried our sorrows."

Another thought suggested concerning genuine friendship is—

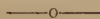
IV. It was TENDERLY RETICENT. "So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great." Why were they silent? We are sometimes silent with amazement; we are struck dumb by astonishment. We are sometimes silent because we know not what words to utter on the occasion; and sometimes we are silent because the tide of our emotion rises and chokes the utterance. Why were these men silent? For any of these reasons? Perhaps for all. Anyhow, in their silence there was wisdom—silence on that occasion was better than speech. They let their flowing tears, their symbolic mantle, their heads turned towards heaven with imploring looks, their sobs and sighs, do what words could not do—express the profound sympathy of their hearts. *Silence, not speech, is the best service that friendship can render in sorrow.* First, because silence is the strongest evidence of the depth of our friendship towards the suffering friend; Secondly, because silence is most consistent with our ignorance of Divine Providence towards our suffering friend; Thirdly, because silence is most congenial to the mental state of our suffering friend.*



FRIENDSHIP TRIED IN TIMES OF AFFLICTION.—It is reported of Herodias, wife of Herod the Tetrarch, when the Emperor had deprived her husband of the tetrarchy and banished him into France, understanding that Herodias was Agrippa's sister, gave her all her husband's estate, supposing that she

* For remarks on this point see *Homilist*, second series, vol. iii., p. 416.

would not go along with him; but she answered the Emperor saying, "There is a cause that hinders me from partaking the benefit of your bounty, the affection I bear to my husband, because I have shared with him in his felicity:" whereupon the Emperor being displeased with her answer, banished her likewise. And thus it is that true friendship is best tried in times of affliction and distress. A brother, a friend, a wife, is for the time of adversity. Away then with those summer birds, those false-hearted friends who, like ditches, are full in the winter season but dry in the heat of summer, when we have most need of them.—*John Spencer.*



As this criticism came too late for the previous number, we insert it here:—

"Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life."—Job ii. 4.

The phrase "skin for skin" is held to be a proverbial expression. It has every appearance of being one. But if it is so, it will have a natural origin, an obvious meaning, as first applied, and a meaning suitable to be otherwise applied than as at first. The explanations usually given do not meet these requirements; and they entirely separate the proverbial saying from the rest of Satan's statement, so that the proverb neither illustrates nor intensifies what he affirms. They all take it in the sense of *exchange*, as if it were "My skin for your skin," "My life for your life;" "You honour me—I honour you;" "You injure me—I will injure you;" all which has relation to a man giving up *all that he has* for his life.

It is here suggested that the proverb refers to the skins of animals dealt in as articles of traffic. Considering the great herds and flocks possessed in those days, and the manifold uses to which skins might be put, it will be easily believed that a large traffic would be carried on in skins. In dealing with skins, whether sold for money or bartered for other wares, they were "all told over," "skin for skin," to show the certainty of the full number bargained for being there. This would easily give rise to the "saying" in its first application; in which application, however, the sense is not that of exchange, but of correspondence; just as in our own phrases, "note for note," "word for word," *i.e.*, note corresponding to note, word corresponding to word, so "skin for skin," *i.e.*, the number of skins *counted over* corresponding to the number affirmed by the disposer. And its application otherwise is obvious where any number of things had to be given up, by one to another, without reserve, as if all told over.

So, then, Satan's meaning on this explanation was—"Everything that a man has—all told over—will he give for his life, accounting for every article, holding nothing in reserve." This proverbially, and, therefore, very briefly, expressed by Satan, the proverb itself calling into the mind's view the actual process of counting over, "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life;" the *proverb* thus understood, both at once illustrating and intensifying the *general affirmation*.

JAMES VIRTUE.

Sermonic Glances at the Gospel of St. John.

As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form, of Sermonic outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengskenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dorner; &c., &c.

Subject: CHRIST AND MAN.

"He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name."—John i. 10-12.

THESE words give us *three* distinct classes of men in relation to Christ:—

I. THOSE WHO KNEW HIM NOT. This is stated as an extraordinary fact. Though "in the world, the world knew Him not." In the world:

First: In the *operations of nature*. Shining in its light, breathing in its life, and speaking in its voice.

Secondly: In the *intuitions of soul*. In the notions of causation, the sentiments of order, the propensities to worship, and the foreboding of conscience.

Thirdly: In the *events of history*. In the creations of literature, in the progress of science, in the growth of commerce, and in the advancing steps of civilization.

Fourthly: In the *special revelations of heaven*. Appearing as the Promised Seed to Adam, as the Shiloh to Jacob, as the Counsellor to Isaiah, the Desire of Nations to Hosea, and the Sun of Righteousness to Malachi, and yet the world knew Him not. This class comprehends Pagans. Another class of men here given are:—

II. Those who knew Him, BUT DID NOT RECEIVE HIM. This class comprehends all who are mere hearers of the Gospel. To know Christ, and to reject Him, is to sin against—

First: The *benevolent designs of God*.

Secondly: The *moral sentiments of our being*. Such as justice, gratitude, and reverence. Sin against—

Thirdly: The higher interests of *human nature*. The other class of men here given are :—

III. Those who received Him, and were DIVINELY AFFILIATED BY THE RECEPTION. “To them gave He power to become the sons of God.” He unites estranged humanity to God, by in-breathing His own filial disposition. A father may have twelve offspring, all young men, and yet there may be only six, or fewer, *sons*. Concerning those who have lost all filial affection for him, and who have grown hostile to him, he says, They are not my *sons*, they are lost to me, they are my enemies. These loving ones are my sons. *It is filial affection that makes the son*. All men are God’s offspring, but the filial only are His sons. The end of Christ’s mission was to inspire men with the *filial disposition*, and thus make them “sons of God.”



Germis of Thought.

THE VISIONS OF PAUL.

Subject: THE FOURTH VISION OF PAUL.

“Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee, for I have much people in this city.”—Acts xviii. 9, 10.

CORINTH was situated on the Isthmus of Achaia, which joins the Peloponnesus to the Continent, and so was the natural point of connexion between the eastern and the western world. It was not more remarkable for its commerce, literature, and refinement than it was for its pride,

profligacy, and general immorality. Paul entered the city, and after labouring there with some degree of success, in the face of much opposition, his Divine Master was pleased to favour him with a vision.

I am anxious to call your attention to the substance of this moral communication, and I perceive that it divided itself into three branches—the *declaration*, the *command*, and the *promise*:—

I. THE SAVIOUR'S DECLARATION. "I have much people in this city." It is quite clear that there were not many Christians at this time in Corinth, hence this declaration had the character of a prediction. As if he said—There are many people here dead in trespasses and sins, ignorant of Me, opposed to Me; these are to be enlightened, subjected to Me, and in time to come will constitute my people. Notice—

1. *The Saviour's Classification of Men.* Those who are the people of Christ, and those who are not. There are other distinctions wise and necessary, personal, social, educational, and civil; but all these affect only the external part of humanity, and that only for a time, but Christ's classification will last for ever. To be Christ's, means the subjugation of our nature, our mind and reflective powers to Him. Who is our teacher, our governor, the centre of our afflictions? Let every one satisfy his conscience in the sight of God.

2. *Christ has a perfect Knowledge of the Human Race.* Paul was anxious to do good; he was soon to be discouraged. Jesus told him, "I have much people in this city." I know the present position and future history of every individual. There are times and periods in human history when the most thoughtful minds cannot form an accurate idea of the general course of human affairs; but there is One who dwells in human nature, that sees in the brightness of light every future movement of the entire race.

3. *Jesus appoints means for the Salvation of Man.* We are not to suppose that Christ has only a naked knowledge of the future, but the future is under his control; consequently not an event takes place without the positive act or intelli-

gent permission of the Lord Jesus. One evidence of this is the fact that he continues the living ministry, suitable to the wants of our spiritual nature.

II. THE SAVIOUR'S COMMAND. "Speak, hold not thy peace." The authority assumed here by Christ should teach us that we are not to do just as we please; we must go where He commands.

1. *He was to exercise the Power of Speech.* One of the most wonderful endowments of man is that grand organ of communication between mind and mind, heart and heart. But what was he to speak? You have not forgotten that the Apostle expounded very fully the principles of natural theology and natural religion at Athens, but only two were converted; and as he passed down to Corinth he said—It is of no use to philosophize here; God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Christ.

2. *He was to banish fear.* The Apostle was not a timid man by any means, but a person of great fortitude and magnanimity; however, it is evident that he had his fears at Corinth. Was he not afraid of the intellectualism of the place? There were in the schools of the city rhetoricians and dialecticians, and the Apostle said—These men I cannot meet, they can argue that black is white and white is black. I have stated the truth clearly and consecutively, and they only criticise. The debilitating effect of fear is known to every man who has a particle of consciousness; it divides, and distracts, and enfeebles the faculties of manhood. Jesus consoles him in kind words—Be not afraid, the plan is fixed, success is certain—the government is Mine.

III. THE SAVIOUR'S PROMISE. "For I am with thee." This is only a reiteration of the general promise, "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." The Apostle felt the force of the guarantee ever after this, and spake the Word with authority.

1. *In the Production of Miracles.* I have no reason from the Bible to believe that the power of working miracles is

continued: the support of the miracle, after all, is the moral proof. The signs and wonders were well adapted to rude, ignorant, and sensuous people; but now the world is advanced in knowledge and civilization, and according to that God adopts his course of teaching. Our vocation is not to make people stare, but to speak the truth in God's name, with a view to God's glory. Good is imperishable, truth will never die—let us have faith in it.

2. *In Turning the Heart to God.* Paul's labours were eminently blessed by God. In the first Epistle to this Church he reminds them of the manner in which he delivered his message, "And my words and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (1 Cor. ii. 4.) I pray that you and I may have strength to meditate more fully on the declaration, command, and promise of Christ, and trust in His grace and faithfulness.

CALEB MORRIS.

(*To be continued.*)



Subject: THE GREATNESS OF GOD.

"Great is our Lord, and of great power; His understanding is infinite."—Psalms cxlvii. 5.

THE subject of the text is: The Greatness of God.
He is great—

1. *In essence.* We exist, but ours is only a borrowed existence. We are great, but ours is only a faint radiation of His excellency and glory. But His—God's—existence is his own: original, essential, necessary. It would be impossible for Him *not* to exist. His *essence is infinite*. Not, as some mistaken philosophers have asserted, that all things we see are only so many modifications of God; but that His great presence pervades and fills all space and all worlds, without being confounded with them. He energizes and gives life to all creatures which move and have their being. He is *un-*

changeable. He says: "I, the Lord, change not." He beholds all things else move, without partaking Himself of their revolutions. 2. He is great in His *eternity*. He is "the everlasting God." He counteth not His days, nor reckoneth up the number of His years. High in the infinitude of His own duration He abides, and His existence is an "eternal now." 3. He is great by *comparison with other beings*—(a) men, (b) angels, (c) devils. 4. He is great in the *immensity of His works*. The immensity thereof proves His greatness. Astronomers tell us that the earth we inhabit is but a speck compared with the illimitable creation of God—a drop, compared with the mighty expanse of ocean spread out before us. All those worlds which fly and shine above us are only the threshold of the vast Temple of Jehovah—the boundary-line which marks the geography of the great Kingdom of the "King of kings, and Lord of lords."

The greatness of God manifests itself in various ways. The text specifies *two*—viz, Power and Knowledge.

He is great—

I. IN POWER. By this He—

1. *Gave all things their present consistency.* Nothing can produce nothing. Creation implies a Creator; that Creator is God. Thus, by this short and easy process of reasoning, do we arrive at the existence of One Sole, Supreme Being, who was the cause of all other beings and things, which had their existence from Him. God "created all things by the word of His power;" and it is by the same power that they all "consist."

2. By this power He *accomplished the work of redemption*. Creation was great, but redemption was greater.

"'Twas great to speak a world from nought,
'Twas greater to redeem."

Creation's song was sublime, but redemption's sublimer still. On the former occasion, angels sang the birth of a world; in the second, they sang the birth of a God. The former was a work of Omnipotent power; the latter, a work of Omnipotent grace!

3. By virtue of this power He *restrains the fury of His enemies, and will, ultimately, destroy all*. Already He has obtained the earnest of that conquest. On the Throne He sits, "expecting" and waiting the approach of that time, when "His enemies shall be made His footstool." "The kings of the earth" may "set themselves," &c. (Psa. ii. 2-6), yet Jehovah holds the reins in His own hands, and restrains the fury of His enemies. Their "damnation slumbereth" only for a time; and, by-and-by, the great day of God's wrath shall come, when none shall be able to stand! The text states that He is great also—

II. IN KNOWLEDGE. "His understanding is infinite;" therefore—

1. *He is cognizant of all the frailties of humanity*. He remembers that we are but dust. "The flesh is weak" often when "the spirit is willing;" so that one "cannot do the things that" one "would." Man has many opposing influences, such as temptation, his own evil heart, the world, and many imperfections "that flesh is heir to." And knowing this, God does not require of man impossibilities—nothing, in fact, beyond his ability to perform.

2. Hence, also, God is cognizant of *all those actions done with a view to bless humanity and glorify Him*. A large proportion of Christian work the world never sees. It is done in secret, as it were. The falling tear, the kindly word, the benevolent action, which the world saw not, are registered on high "against that day." God knew all about it, and still remembers. His infinite knowledge will never allow Him to forget. The work may have been done in *secret*, but it shall be rewarded *openly*, before assembled angels and men. What motives, therefore, to work!

3. He is cognizant of *all, even our secret, sins*. His Omniscience travels through the universe, "beholding the evil and the good," and none can escape His penetrating glance. His eyes of flame will search the darkest corners of the human heart, and bring to "light the hidden things of darkness."

With unfailing certainty will Jehovah discern every *secret* thought, and word, and action.—(Eccles. xii. 14.)

CONCLUSION:

1. Knowing these things, how earnestly should the Christian work for God, in view of a reward so glorious!

2. How ought the sinner to dread the revelation of all, even his *secret*, sins, at the judgment-seat of Christ!

3. Therefore, repent now.

“Be wise to-day, ’tis madness to defer.”

“Come now,” saith God, “and let us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”

JOHN TESSEYMAN.



Subject: THE THINGS ABOVE.

“Set your affection on things above.”—Colossians iii. 2.

I. BECAUSE these are the ONLY THINGS WHICH DEMAND MAN’S SUPREME ATTENTION.

(1.) Heaven is higher, or above the earth. By “things above” we are to understand things in heaven. Heaven is always spoken of as above the earth, partly owing to our relative situation on the earth, and partly to express its superiority. John speaks of Christ as “He that cometh from above;” and he interprets this term by a subsequent remark: “He that cometh from above, is above all.” Thus we are taught, not only His heavenly nature, but His transcendent superiority. Thus, the text, speaking of “things above,” points us to heaven as the place where they are, and intimates, by the same phrase, their great superiority.

(2.) The things above are spiritual, and exactly suited to our nature. The spiritual is above the material. God is a spirit. There is a spirit in man, and this spirit cannot be satisfied but in God, and on spiritual things. The soul of man is moral in its nature, and it requires moral supplies to satisfy it. The highest forms of material things are only adapted to

the soul in a very subordinate sense. The soul, in all its native weakness and corruption, is far more excellent than anything which pertains to the body. It has faculties which require something beyond earthly things. They soar into the empyrean of a loftier existence, crave for higher and purer joys than earth can afford; and these are at the right hand of God.

II. Because man is endowed with GREAT CAPACITIES, proportional to the greatness of these things—"affections."

(1.) The moral affections make up the moral character of man. As these affections are, so we are—good or bad, holy or unholy. They make up the character of all men. When we consider how infinitely different the things above and the things on earth here spoken of are—how sensible and gross the one, how spiritual and pure the other—it may be little surprising that the same affections should be capable of a relish for both, or that they should have any inclination at all to objects purely spiritual. But we find that they really have. Our Maker, having intended us for a progress through both worlds, hath fitted us to either. If the affections are chained down to earthly things, the character is unholy; but if they aspire to "things above," they blaze forth in a beautiful light, and a virtuous character, which refine as they ascend, until they mix with their kindred element in God.

(2.) These affections raise man higher in the scale of being than the animal. The animal cannot love God; man can. It is the property of the beast only to enjoy the creature, but of the man to enjoy the Creator. God never placed the animal in a position to love Him, nor endowed him with affections for that end. But He placed man in such a position, and furnished him with affections to love Him and spiritual things. When the affections are set on "things above," they conduce the most directly to raise and dignify the nature of man, and, of consequence, contribute also most powerfully to make him happy. The exercise of our affections is accompanied with an agreeable feeling, or emotion. Those authors whose object is to furnish amusement to the mind avail themselves of these

affections, as one of the chief vehicles of pleasure; and when they are set on things spiritual in their nature, and holy in their tendency, the pleasure derived from that predominates over every other enjoyment, and fills the heart with blessedness.

III. Because it is the PRIMARY DUTY of man to employ his affections in these things.

(1.) This is the end which God had in view in giving us these powers—viz., to love Him and spiritual things. God made man like Himself, and for Himself; endowed him with powers to love truth, purity, and holiness. The affections are not made to love material possessions, as the supreme objects of the heart. They are made to love Christ, and the beauties of His character—to mount towards Heaven, into which He hath ascended, and bring the spirit and beauty of that world to earth. It is utterly impossible to enjoy the pleasures of Heaven without training the affections to an habitual desire of them. If we would answer the end for which our affections were given us, and be made meet for Heaven, we must send our affections there before us, to view its riches, taste its fruits, take possession for us, and bring us a sample of its love, beauty, and pleasure.

(2.) If this duty is not fulfilled in life, the affections will be degraded by things below, and at last sink the soul to hopeless misery. Let us then abandon those too eager pursuits for the transient things of earth, and open our understanding to the things of Heaven, and give them all the warmth and force of our affections. Seek ye these things, and the noble aspirations of your soul will lift you above all that is gross and sensual, bring you near to the boundaries of God's glorious Kingdom, and give you some foretaste of the fruits provided on the table of the King. Let us then strip ourselves for this delightful course, shake off all incumbrances, and, with all the activity and vigour that our own resolution, and the grace of God, can give us, "forget those things which are behind, and reach forth unto those things which are before, press," &c.—Phil. iii. 13, 14.

JOHN STEVENSON.

Variations on Themes from Scripture.

No. XXVIII.

Subject: SNEERING PHARISEES.

“And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things : and they derided Him.”—Luke xvi. 14.

THE alleged impossibility of at once serving God and Mammon—summing up our Lord’s discourse on the true riches, and the unrighteous and therefore untrue—this was a hard saying for the Pharisees to bear ; who among them could bear it ? But then again, who among them could answer it, disprove it, refute it ? That was not easy. But it was easy to sneer. So they sneered. And, as Paley said of Gibbon, who can refute a sneer ?

All those things about the mammon of unrighteousness, and unfaithful stewardship, and divided service, “The Pharisees, also who were covetous, heard and they derided Him.” The Greek is ἐξεμυκτήριζον : they sneered, or almost literally, in our homely phrase, they “turned up their noses” at Him ; for the derivation is from μυκτήρ, nose.* The verb occurs again in chap. xxiii. 35, where we read that while the people stood beholding the Crucified One, the rulers also with them “derided Him,” ἐξεμυκτήριζον—bidding Him that had saved others, save Himself, if He were indeed the Christ, the chosen of God. (Save Himself ? But had He not come to save that which was lost ?)

The sneer of Gibbon is characterized as “solemn” by Byron—himself accomplished in the art of sneering, though seldom

* Analogous in the Latin is the *Naso suspendis adunco* of Horace ; and in Persius, the expressive “—— Rides :—et nimis Naribus indulges.”

The Greek verb is the rendering of Solomon’s “A foolish man *despiset* his mother” (Proverbs xv. 20)—as it is also of the cruel mockery of Psalm xxii. 7, and even of Divine derision—fearfully suggestive—in Psalm ii. 4.

of a solemn sort: the historian is pictured in his Lausanne retreat, hiving wisdom with each studious year, shaping his weapon with an edge severe—

“Sapping a solemn creed with solemn sneer;
The lord of irony—that master-spell
Which stung his foes to wrath.”

One of Byron's best-known figures in fiction is duly provided for out of the same armoury:—

“There was a laughing devil in his sneer,
That raised emotion both of rage and fear.”

Self-portrayed, the poet, in this as in other salient points of the same painting. Avowedly he could, and would, and did sneer when the humour took him, which was often enough—much in the mode of Goethe's Mephistopheles: “If I sneer sometimes, it is because I cannot well do less, and now and then it also suits my rhymes.” All sneers, Frederick Robertson asserts, are shallow and superficial. Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes somewhere remarks that men who see *into* their neighbours are very apt to be contemptuous; whereas men who see *through* them find something lying behind every human soul which it is not for them to sit in judgment on, or to attempt to “sneer out of the order of God's manifold universe.” Landor makes Alfieri declare of the court people with whom he has had to do, “The rascals have ruined my physiognomy. I wear an habitual sneer upon my face”—and they, on *his* showing, the whole and sole cause. A popular fiction describes one of those men so often met with, who, with an air of profound respect, have at the same time a slight smile hanging ever about the corners of their mouths, which casts a sneering expression over their entire face: the people, it is added, “on whom nature or habit has inflicted such a look are always hated,* because, without having a pretext for

* Lucy Fountain, in Mr. Charles Reade's story, avowedly, and in large capitals, “hates” Mr. Talboys, because “he is always backbiting and sneering: he admires nothing and nobody.” “He has admired you ever since he saw you,” replies her uncle. “What! has he never sneered at me?” asks the quick-witted girl. “Never, ungrateful girl, never,” rejoins the matter-of-fact uncle. “Then that is very humiliating,” says

resenting it, we perceive that they are insulting us in their hearts." But the potentiality of sneering runs through a large gamut of expression, and varies in offence or in almost absolute offensiveness accordingly. Dr. Campbell wrote of Burke, in 1787, "There is a good deal of placidity in his countenance, but nothing of striking dignity, and from his nose, I think that no man can sneer with more ease and effect if he chooses." Of a more pronounced type was the "dread sneer" of the younger Pitt, as we see him depicted in *St. Stephen's*—

"His front with labour paled;
The eyes that rarely glowed, but never quailed:
Within, disease—without, the host of foes;
What grand contempt sustains that calm repose!
Gives the dread sneer that wither'd Erskine down,
And leaves the brow scarce ruffled by its frown."

Wordsworth speaks in his autobiographic *Prelude* of "all that silent language," as he expressively calls it, which so oft in conversation between man and man—

"Blots from the human countenance all trace
Of beauty and of love."

"Is he sneering?" asks Colonna of Da Riva, in their colloquy with Agolanti (in the *Legend of Florence*):—

"— Is he sneering?
Or is his zeal, and fame for polite manners,
Proving itself, in spite of his own teeth,
Sharpening its edge upon this oily venom?
Riva.—Something of both; he sneers, because he hates us;
And would not have it seen, because he fears us."

Therein lies the genesis, the natural history of a sneer. The cowardice may adopt the subtle tactics of Pope's Atticus, who assented with civil leer, and, without himself sneering, taught the rest to sneer. Sheridan's Snake compliments Lady Sneerwell on her distinctive "mellowness of sneer." It has been

Lucy; "he takes me for his inferior. His superiors he always sneers at." She is convinced that had he seen anything good and spirited in her, he could not help detracting from and sneering at her.

said of Jeffrey's sneer, that, at a distance it might almost have been taken for an infant smile; and yet how thoroughly it did its work! "It was as though the shadow of poison could kill"—his sneers were "so light, and apparently gentle." Whereas, of Scott it is recorded by Washington Irving, his Abbotsford guest, and a real student of his writings, "I do not recollect a sneer throughout his conversation, any more than there is throughout his works." * Another distinguished American, the historian Prescott, says of Sir Walter, whose frank address was an *open sesame* to every heart, that "he did not deal in sneers, the poisoned weapons which come, not from the head, as the man who launches them is apt to think,† but from an acid heart, or an acid stomach, a very common laboratory of such small artillery." De Quincey calls it untrue

* Habitual sneerers are as rare among his characters, as they are common among those of a later school of fiction. Bletson, in *Woodstock*, is one of them: "a habitual sneer on his countenance, even when he least wished to express contempt on his features, seemed to assure the individual addressed, that in Bletson he conversed with a person of intellect far superior to his own."

Fielding's Blifil has "one of those grinning sneers with which the devil marks his best beloved."

Charlotte Brontë characterizes her sister Emily's Heathcliff, in *Wuthering Heights*, as standing unredeemed, never once swerving in his arrow-straight course to perdition, to the hour when he lies on his back a grim, stalwart corpse, with wide-gazing eyes that seem "to sneer at the attempts to close them, and parted lips, and sharp, white teeth that sneer too."

Mrs. Gore's Lady Leighton, in *The Hamiltons*, deplores the conviction her intimacy with the Eardley clique has impressed upon her, of the "excess of frightfulness" to which "we may be brought by a universal sneer."

Hook exhibits on the face of his retired Excellency, Sir Frederick Brashleigh, "one of those sneers which ere now has paralysed a subaltern, or exterminated a commissary."

† How closes Mr. Disraeli the third chapter of *Vivian Grey*? Sententiously—at least with this sentence: "A smile for a friend, and a sneer for the world, is the way to govern mankind, and such was the motto of Vivian Grey."

Compare Voltaire's *mot d'ordre*—"Marchez toujours en ricanant, mes amis, dans le chemin de la vérité." *C'est le refrain perpétuel*, Sainte Beuve says.

that "a sneer cannot be answered," but the answer too often imposes circumlocution; and upon a subject, he adds, which makes wise men grave, a sneer argues so much perversion of heart, that it cannot be thought uncandid to infer some corresponding perversion of intellect. "Perfect sincerity never existed in a professional sneerer."

FRANCIS JACOX.

—o—

The Preacher's Dissecting Room;

CONTAINING

PEN PORTRAITS OF REPRESENTATIVE PREACHERS.

"WITHOUT A PARABLE SPAKE HE NOT UNTO THEM."

Complaints against the modern pulpits are rife alike in social circles and literary productions. Whilst many of them are characterized by flippant ignorance and sceptical rancour, others are marked both by good judgment and holy feeling. The purpose of these Sketches is the improvement of the pulpit. Nothing would the writer deprecate more than to wound the heart or get the finger of ridicule pointed at any honest-hearted preacher of Christ; hence he has clad his characters and circumstances with a fictitious vesture—like the Great Teacher, he has spoken in parables. We shall examine representative preachers of the four great prevailing schools—the SENSATIONAL, including (1.) the tragic; (2.) the comic; (3.) the rhapsodic. The INTELLECTUAL, including (1.) the technical; (2.) the grandiloquous; (3.) the philosophic. The SPIRITUAL, including (1.) the mystical; (2.) the intuitional; and the NONDESCRIPT, including a great variety.

No. IV.

THE TECHNICAL PREACHER.

LEAVING the sensational school of preaching, of which we have given three of the leading types, we pass to the intellectual. This school is not so large as the former, for the obvious reason that the senses of all men are developed, but the intellect of only the minority of any population. All men feel; only a few *think*; all have an animal heart; only a few have brain capable of much intellectual action. All men like feeling; there is a natural pleasure in the gratification of the senses, hence excitement is a universal pursuit. The popularity of gambling, races, theatricals, music-halls, and bacchanalian orgies, spring from man's love of excitement. But few men

like thinking; to the masses thinking is a distasteful task. In short the intellectual development of the race requires mental discipline—a discipline involving a course of reading, reflection, ratiocination; and such mental schooling, even in enlightened England, has been, up to the present moment, confined to the few. It is not surprising, therefore, that the intellectual school of preachers—a school which appeals rather to the understandings than to the passions, is far less popular than the sensational.

The intellectual school has, like the sensational, a variety of types. We select three, and the first shall be the technical. The technical preacher is an intellectual formalist; he does everything by a fixed formula. He has a formula by which he reasons; all his logical processes are rigorously governed by rules. He has a formula by which he interprets Scripture. From a grammatical rule he would not deviate, though the whole spiritual tide of a passage rolled against him. He is more alive to roots of words, Greek particles, and Hebrew points, than to the moral pulsations of the text. Philology is more to him than divinity; the rules of grammar more than the reign of grace. He has a formula by which he constructs his sermons. The materials are brought together on account of their affinity to the prevailing dogma of the creed which he has adopted; and the plan on which they are organized is according to certain homiletic rules which have been laid down for him by his teachers. He has a formula by which he delivers his discourse. The voice is modulated, the hands are moved, the eyes are turned, according to rule. In fact his adherence to rules in all his departments of work is rigorously precise.

The technical preacher, like the others we have described, is found in connexion with all Christian Churches. The one we shall give as a specimen is the one we last heard, and who belonged to the Presbyterian community. He was a Scotchman. In person he was somewhat diminutive: neither in bulk nor height did he come up to the average growth of a British man. His head, which was whitened by the snow of years, though appearing large for his body, was not remarkable either for size or form; the intellect of Shakespeare could not have found sufficient room under its roof to breathe, still less to act. The eye was grey, small, and sinister. He had taken his degree of M.A. at the Edinburgh University, and had distinguished himself both in classics and mathematics. It has been remarked that small-headed men generally make the best mathematicians and linguists. Sir William Hamilton, if we remember rightly, has made this observation.

There is too much fertility of thought, varied faculty, and ever springing impulse in great souls to enable them to apply themselves easily either to the science of words or computations. Our preacher, too, had been well drilled in the theology of his Church: the Assembly's catechism he could repeat by heart. He had not been long in England when we heard him; he had built a church in one of our large towns, and had gathered together all the Scotchmen that belonged to other congregations. We learnt that he justified his advent into the town on the ground that there was an actual necessity for a place where the *sound* Gospel was preached. He ignored the labours and even the existence of those ministers of the varied religious communities who preached Christ irrespective of conventional theologies. We learnt also that he was a great pastoral visitor: his habit was to pay frequent periodical visits to every seat-holder. He flattered the mothers by kissing the children, and calling them beautiful. He pleased the husbands by sitting down with them in the evening, after the labours of the day, taking with them a glass of toddy and a whiff of the popular weed. The little parties that were got up for him he seldom failed to charm, by dealing out amusing anecdotes, with which he always came amply supplied. Early on Monday mornings he was seen calling at the various houses of his people in the neighbourhood. In passing, we cannot forbear expressing our condemnation of such visitations as these. Much of what is called pastoral visitation in these days is nothing but toadyism, canvassing for seat-holders, and it is fast bringing the pulpit of England into popular contempt. A man who is inspired with the Divine grandeur of his mission, who feels the responsibility of his work, the value of souls, and the brevity of time, will never condescend to such miserable gossip.

The congregation, the Sunday on which we heard him, was not very large. The church would hold about 1,200; there could not have been more than 800 present. They appeared to be mostly Scotchmen, and all of the middle and lower class. The congregation was thoughtful, and apparently devout. After the preacher had ascended the pulpit he offered a short prayer; then a hymn was sung; then he read a portion of the Old Testament Scriptures; then he prayed; then followed a hymn, then he read a chapter from the New Testament; then he prayed; then they sung. All this introductory service was to us intolerably dull. The long prayers were neither adapted to inspire or lead the devotions of a congregation. They could lull to sleep, and they did so in some cases—they could try the

patience, and they did so in our case. The introductory service being over, he took for his text:—

“Being justified by faith.”

He began by explaining terms. He made a number of remarks on *δικαιωθέντες*. He mentioned the number of times the word was used in the New Testament. He said the term was forensic, and meant to acquit. He said that in every passage *δικαίωω* might be rendered to acquit judicially, or extra-judicially to approve and declare approbation. Having referred to various passages where the word was used, and endeavouring to show that it had the same meaning everywhere, he proceeded to deal with the other word *πίστεως*. He seemed quite at home while talking of these words, repeating them in Greek very frequently. The people all the while were evidently, for the most part, uninterested: a few seemed to be impressed, as he undoubtedly wished them to be, with the wonderful learning of their preacher. Having dealt pedantically with the verbalities, he came to what he called the doctrine of Justification by Faith.

First: The nature of justification. He said it was a forensic act; that we could not err in viewing it too strongly in this light; that it was an act of God that bore a striking analogy to what took place in courts of human judicature. It was not a fatherly act, but a regal act. God could not, in His treatment of men as sinners, fully carry out His fatherly desires; He was bound to act as a king. He said a great deal about the distinction between justification and pardon, justification and adoption, justification and sanctification. It was an eternal act of God—a sovereign act of God—and an irrevocable act: once acquitted, acquitted for ever. He endeavoured to show exactly the way God could do it as a king. There was an enormous difficulty in accomplishing it; the Great King had to contend against certain attributes of His nature, and to contend against the claims of His own law; and at last He found out a plan, and that was, to make Christ, His own beloved Son, to suffer in their stead. Secondly: The means of justification. “By faith.” He dwelt very largely on faith—spoke of it as an act of the mind—directed to certain doctrines, as a principle in the heart; directed to Christ as a substitute, as the gift of God, as something that man could do, and something that he could not do.

Such are the mere outlines of a discourse that occupied a full hour, which was delivered in unexceptionable language, with a good voice; with the airs of a pedant, and the arrant dogmatism of one who spoke as if he were on intimate terms with the Infinite, and understood all the secrets of the Eternal. The congregation did not seem at all interested in the discourse. They sat through it in their pews, because it was the proper thing to do; but the vacant look—the lounging attitude—indicated an unmistakeable lack of interest. No soul seemed stirred by new thoughts, or excited by new emotions.

What are we to say to such preaching? Do we say that the sermon was too learned? By no means. We not only approve of a learned ministry, but feel that such learning as involves an acquaintance with the original languages in which God communicated His Holy Truth is one of the most essential

qualifications for the sacred work. But the learning we want is not the learning that will parade before a congregation the grammatical process by which the minister has got at the truth of a passage, but the learning that will give the results in language clear, strong, and living. We want a learning which will fill the mind more with ideas than with words—take it from the verbal picture to the living subject, from the symbol to the reality—a learning that shall use words as a torch-light to bring souls under the full radiance of God's Great Sun.

In relation to this kind of preaching, we object to it—First: Because it degrades the God of the universe. The God which the sermon before us presented to man was a mere political functionary—a king, and not a very strong king either, but somewhat weak. He had a kindness in His nature towards human transgressors, which He could not fully and spontaneously manifest, on account of certain laws with which He was embarrassed, and on account also of some apprehension lest He should upset the order of His kingdom and destroy His own throne. Indeed, in the sermon the Eternal was made to appear to us, in relation to the whole human race, as a judge in the Old Bailey, who offers to acquit all the prisoners at the Bar, on the simple condition that they would believe in some substitute which had been provided. It is true that God in the Bible is called a King, but He is also called a Brother, Friend, Husband, Father, &c. And it would be as reasonable to build up a system of theology upon any of these characters as upon that of a king. It is simple metaphor. There is no analogy whatever between human kings and God, even were they perfect, but human kings, as they have appeared on the earth, have been amongst the most contemptible of men in moral character. The regal *authority* which belongs to God is not found in connexion with any creature—even the highest, either amongst men or angels. It is absolute, universal, governed ever by infinite love and tenderness. God is infinitely nearer to me than a king. He is my Father; He is infinitely nearer to me than that, He is my proprietor, He owns me: He is infinitely nearer to me even than that; He is my life; I cannot breathe, think, act, or even sin without Him. In Him I live, and move, and have my being. A system of theology, therefore, built upon what is called the regnal character of God, is a fiction, a fiction from which all that is truly philosophic in human nature revolts, a fiction which tends to degrade the Divine character, and which stands in direct opposition to that view of Him which His own blessed Son gave in the parable of the prodigal. Is there no truth

then in the doctrine of justification by faith? Yes, it is full of truth, grand, philosophic, soul-ennobling truth. To be justified, in the Bible sense, is to be made right—right in our own character, and right in our relation to God and His universe. And it can be shown, on pure philosophic grounds, that it is impossible for man as a sinner to be made right without faith in Jesus Christ.

We object to this kind of preaching—Secondly: Because it is utterly unfitted to improve the moral character of mankind. Such sermons are only little schemes of abstract thought: they are addressed, not to human nature, but merely to certain logical and speculative faculties; they have no Divine life in them, and no relation whatever to the profound moral sympathies, cravings, and felt exigencies of the soul. They are human conjectures of the thing which human nature requires—not the thing itself. Men want the bread and water of life, not chemical theories about these necessities of existence. Men want the Divine Christ, not human creeds; faith in Him, not in what men say about Him, is the soul-rectifying force. It is because men have been preaching their own miserable dogmas, for the last eighteen centuries, that Christianity is where it is now in the world—a mere theme of thought, and subject of talk, rather than a vital, moulding, all-commanding force. Had men preached Christ all these ages, instead of their own foggy metaphysics and borrowed dogmas, would commerce be so corrupt, would public manners be so frivolous and hollow; would war be a thing tolerated by laymen, still less, advocated by bishops, and sanctioned by Churches? “The letter killeth,” says the Apostle Paul; and certainly the verbalities of these technical preachers have been killing the highest moral sentiments of humanity. The man who is perplexing his readers with refined criticisms, or dazzling them with rhetorical language, or tying them down to the mere verbalism of Scripture or speculative credenda, is killing his hearers. It is said by Burke, “That no man comprehends less of the majesty of the English constitution than the *Nisi Prius* lawyer, who is always dealing with the technicalities and precedents.” As truly we may say, that no man understands less of the grand spirit of the Gospel, than he who is constantly dealing with the verbalities of religion.

EPISCOPUS.

A Talmudic Study with St. Paul;

OR,

GLEANINGS FROM DELITZSCH'S NOTES TO HIS "PAULUS DES APOSTELS BRIEF AN DIE RÖMER IN DAS HEBRÄISCHE ÜBERSETZT UND AUS TALMUD UND MIDRASH ERLÄUTERT" (PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS TRANSLATED INTO HEBREW AND ELUCIDATED FROM THE TALMUD AND MIDRASH).

(Continued from p. 234.)

VIII.—2. "*The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus.*" The Thora is imperishable, but not in its Mosaic form. Even the old synagogal witnesses say that a new form will be received through the Messiah. *Talkut Schimoni* on Isaiah, § 296, the Holy One, blessed be He, is represented as He sits in Paradise surrounded by the blessed and by the family of angels, and the sun, moon, and stars, and propounds a new Thora, which He intends to give through the Messiah; and a passage in *Othijoth de-Rabbi Akiba*,¹ says that God, on Sinai, entrusted to His people two faiths, one referring to Israel and one to Messiah—one faith containing the national life-rule of Israel; and one the new life-rule of the Messianic age.

3. "*In the form of sinful flesh.*" Only בְּחֵצֶה (in the form), not flesh, born of flesh. As Moses ha-Darschan says in Raymond. Martini on Gen. xxxiv. 1: "God not only punished the violators of maidens (Ez. xxiii. 3), by their own maidens becoming a prey to others (Lam. v. 11), but he comforts them by a maiden, namely, by the miracle of a woman's son (Jer. xxxi. 22), begotten by God (Ps. ii. 7). In another passage of this Midrash, on Gen. xxxvii. 22, we have the following as spoken by God: "You complain before me that you are fatherless orphans; even the Redeemer, whom I will call forth from you, has no father; for, according to Zech. vi. 12, he sprouts, according to Is. liii. 2, he grows, and according to Psalm cx. 3, he is born as dew from the womb of the morning." Similar testimonies to the miraculous human

¹ An old pseudonymic Midrash on the Secrets of Letters.

origin of Messiah occur, *e.g.*, in *Bereshith rabba* on Gen. iv. 25; according to which Messiah was not to be a son of human parents, like other children, but a *ורע אחר*, that is, *באממקום אחר*. The author of the Commentary, *Mathnoth Kehunnah*,¹ looks upon this as referring to the Moabitish origin of Messiah (Ruth iv. 17 ss.); but Esth. iv. 14 affords a better interpretation. In the original text of *Bereshith rabba*, the guarantor of this Haggada is called Chusith (v. *Aruch*, sub. verb. *כזית*), Compare Luke viii. 3, *Xovžâ* (Chuzä).

9. "*Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ.*" The same comparison occurs, *Bereshith rabba*, c. 8. The unity of the two is argued from Genesis i. 2, compared with Isaiah xi. 2.

11. *The resuscitation of the dead a work of the Holy Spirit.* So the old Synag. teaches. The reading, *δὰ τοῦ*, corresponds with *Tanchuma*, 38°. "In this world my Spirit has given you wisdom, and in the world to come it is my Spirit who makes you living." The New Testament expression, "The Holy Spirit who dwelleth in you," characteristically surpasses that of the old Synag.: "the Holy Spirit who descends upon you." What the Apostle bases upon the resurrection of Christ, results, according to the Jewish view, from the merit of Isaac. "In virtue of the merit of Isaac," says the *Pesikta de-Rab Cahana*, "who offered himself up on the altar, the Holy One, blessed be He, will one day raise the dead." The synagogue clings to the shadow of the future.

13. *Living after the flesh kills.* Similarly *Tamid*,² 32°. "What would the Messiah do that He might live?" Answer, "He would kill Himself." "What would He do to die?" Answer, "He would keep Himself alive." And *Sanhedrin*, 43^b, on Psalm l. 23: "To every one who offers up his own evil desires and confesses his sins, the Scripture reckons it as if he praised the Holy One, blessed be He, in two worlds, the present and the future."

15. "*Abba, Father.*" *Berachoth*, 16^b, it is said that men

¹ Commentary on the *Rabboth*. See note, p. 175, in *The Homilist*, March 1871.

² Talm. Tr. on the Daily Morning and Evening Sacrifices.

servants and maid servants are not permitted to call the master of the house אבא (Abba).

18. *The value of suffering.* Among many encomiums on the value of suffering, the following may be compared: *Sifri* 73^b: "Precious before God are sufferings, for the glory of God descends upon those who suffer." And: "Which is the way that leads to the future world?" Answer. "Sufferings."

20, 21. "*The creature subjected to vanity in hope.*" *Bereshith rabba*, c. 12, says: "Since man sinned, the things which God created perfect have gone to destruction, and they can never be put right again till the Son of Perez (Messiah) comes." According to another Midrash in *Bamidbar rabba*, c. 17, the Messiah brings back all that Adam lost and forfeited; he takes the curse from the earth and the veil from the stars. And we read in *Bereshith rabba*, c. 26, that, originally man had power over everything, but after his fall everything rose in rebellion against him. Vid. Biesenthal. All these pearls scattered in the Midrash and Talmud appear in the Epistle of Paul, as the members of a living whole, the heart of which is the Christ of God.

28. "All that the All-Merciful does, He does for good, i.e., for the best," *Berachoth*, 60^b.

29. "*Whom He did foreknow.*" One of the most remarkable Midrashic passages on the suffering Messiah in the *Talkut Shimon* on Isaiah, § 359, begins with stating that the Holy One, blessed be He, foresaw the race of the Messiah and His work before the creation of the world. The race דור of the Messiah is what the *Pesikta rabbathi*, in a similar passage, calls בַּת שְׁלוֹ, his party, the entirety of those who hold to Him.

"*To the image of his Son.*" Comp. *Pesikta de-Rab Cahana*, 419^a: "The cloak with which Messiah will be clothed will beam brighter and brighter from one end of the world to the other, and Israel will shine in His light and say: Blessed is the eye that is worthy to see Him, for the opening of His mouth is blessing and peace, and His speech satisfaction of spirit. Dignity and majesty is in His outward appearance, certainty and safety in His discourse, His tongue is pure

pardon and forgiveness, His prayer is fragrance, His supplication holiness and purity; blessed are they of Israel for whom such is reserved, for it is said, Ps. xxxi. 19: How great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee."

"*First-born among many brethren.*" *Shemoth rabba*, c. 19, we read: "The Holy One, blessed be He, said to Moses: As I made Jacob my first-born (for it is said: Israel my son, my first-born, Ex. iv. 22), so I make the King Messiah the First-born (for it is said, Ps. lxxxix. 27: I will make Him my First-born)."

32. "*With Him all things.*" According to the Midrashic form, *הכל בכלל*, which is used, *e.g.*, to denote the request of Solomon for wisdom: the one gift includes everything. Vid. Schöttgen *in loco*.

34. "*Maketh intercession for us.*" *Bereshith rabba* on Gen. xxiv. 67, says of the Messiah: "If Israel sins, He asks mercy for them."

N.B.—*Errata in The Homilist for March:—*

P. 170, Note 1. For "Greek," read "Great."

P. 175, Note 1. For "Bayikra," read "Vayikra."

(*To be continued.*)

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The Trial of Abraham.

GEN. xxii. 1-19.

BEING AN ATTEMPT TO EXHIBIT THE JEWISH INTERPRETATION OF THIS REMARKABLE EVENT FROM THE MOST ANCIENT TIME.

(*Continued from p. 236.*)

II. *The Philosophical Interpretation.*—Like the ancient traditional interpretation, the philosophical commentators agree that the trial of Abraham was designed for the benefit of others, and that God did not intend it to ascertain thereby whether or not the patriarch would obey. Like the ancients, moreover, these mediæval philosophical interpreters differ from each other as soon as they begin to particularize the individual for whose benefit the temptation scene was enacted.

(*a.*) Thus R. Jehudah ha-Levi, in his celebrated philosophical work entitled *Kosari*, maintains that God's temptation of Abraham was designed to make the obedience of the patriarch pass from potency into reality, since this obedience was the cause of his happiness. "Because

thou hast done this . . . I will bless thee." (Gen. xxii. 16, 17.)* As the capacity for doing good is not rewarded, and as God wished to bless Abraham, He thus gave him the opportunity of exemplifying his capacity in order that He might reward him.

(b.) Next in point of age, but of greater importance, is the view propounded by Maimonides. This great luminary remarks, "The import of temptation is very obscure, and forms one of the greatest difficulties in religion. The Pentateuch speaks of six instances, as I shall show in this section.† As to the view which people generally entertain of temptation—viz., that God sends calamities to a man without his having committed any sin, for the sake of giving him a greater reward, this opinion is not expressed in any text of the law, and among the six passages there is only one (Deut. viii. 16) which, if taken literally, could make us believe such a thing, but which I shall explain in the sequel. This opinion, however, is in direct opposition to the spirit of the law, for it says, 'a God of truth without iniquity' (Deut. xxxii. 4.) . . . As to the temptations which the Pentateuch mentions in the passages in question, they seem to be intended as a trial or experiment, in order to ascertain the degree of faith of such a man or such a nation, or the degree of piety. This is precisely the great difficulty, and particularly the history of the sacrifice of Isaac, which was known only to God and the two persons, to one of whom it was said, 'for now I know that thou fearest God' (Gen. xxii. 12). . . .

"As to the history of Abraham, with regard to the sacrifice of Isaac, it contains two great ideas which are fundamental in religion. The first is to show us how far the fear and love of God ought to extend. Abraham was commanded to do a thing with which the sacrifice of money or even of life cannot be compared. It was, indeed, the most extraordinary thing which could happen in the world, one of those things which human nature could not have been thought capable of accepting. Imagine a childless man with an intense desire for offspring, possessing a large fortune and position, wishing for his descendants to become a nation, if he begets a son after despairing of having one, what love, what passion he would have for this son. However, fearing God, and wishing to obey His command, he makes but little of this beloved son, gives up all that he had hoped from him, and consents to immolate him after a journey of several days. Indeed if he had hastened to do it in the very moment in which he received the command, it would have been an act of madness and precipitation, without reflection. But to do such a thing several days after having received the command, was an act which presupposes thought and mature reflection, the reverence which the command of God demands as well as a love and fear of God. Certainly we must not presume upon other circumstances, nor attribute to Abraham any motive,

* Comp. *Kosari*, v. 20.

† The six instances are Gen. xxii. 1, Exod. xvi. 4, xx. 17, Deut. viii. 2, 16, xiii. 4.

for if our father, Abraham, hastened to sacrifice Isaac, it was not in the fear that God would cause him to die, or reduce him to poverty, but simply because it is due from mortals to love and to fear God, apart from all hope of reward, and all fear of punishment, as we have set forth in several places. Therefore the angel said to him, 'For now I know that thou fearest God.' (Gen. xxii. 12.) This signifies, this act by which thou meritest in the absolute sense the epithet of *ירא אלהים*, *fearing God*, will show to all mortals how far the fear of God ought to extend. Thou wilt know that this idea has been confirmed and propounded in the Law, where it is said that the whole of the Law, all which it contains as to commands, prohibitions, promises, and narratives, has for its object but one thing, which is the fear of God. Here are the words, 'If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this Law, that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name,' &c. (Deut. xxviii. 58.) This is one of the two ideas which are intended in the narrative of the sacrifice of Isaac.

"The second idea is to show that the prophets should take as real what revelation brings them from God. For we must not think that this revelation taking place, as we have shown in a dream, or a vision, by means of the imaginative faculties, it follows that what the prophets heard, or what was presented to them in a parable, was not certain, or at least, that it should partake of anything doubtful. It has, therefore, been designed to show us that all which the prophet sees in his prophetic vision is for him real and certain; that he doubts nothing, and that he considers it a real thing perceived by the senses or the intellectual faculties. The proof of this is, that Abraham hastened to sacrifice his only son, whom he loved, as he was commanded, although this command came to him in a dream and a vision. But if the prophetic dream had been obscure for the prophets, if any doubt or uncertainty had remained with them as to what they saw in the prophetic vision, they would not have hastened to do what is repugnant to human nature, and Abraham would not have consented to perform in doubt an act of such awful gravity.

"Indeed, it was necessary that this event, viz., the sacrifice in question, should come to pass by means of Abraham, and to a man like Isaac, for our father, Abraham, was the first to make known the unity of God, and to establish prophecy, so as to perpetuate this belief, and to draw men towards it, as it is said, 'For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment.' (Gen. xviii. 19.) Therefore, as they followed the true and good principles which they had learned from him, so we ought to follow the principles embodied in his acts, and particularly in this act by which he established the fundamental principle of the truth of prophecy, and by which he has shown us how far the fear and the love of God ought to go."

It will be seen from the preceding that Maimonides combats the view propounded by Jehudah ha-Levi. But, notwithstanding his protest, the celebrated Nachmanides (1195-1270) advocated the same opinion,

though he enunciates it somewhat differently, as may be seen from the following exposition of Gen. xxii. 1, which he gives in his commentary on the Pentateuch, "*And God tempted Abraham*," &c. "The import of temptation, according to my opinion, is as follows. Because the deeds of men are absolutely in his own power; if he wishes to do anything he does it, and if he does not wish, he leaves it; it can only be called temptation on the part of the tempted. But the tempter, the Blessed One, simply commands that the thing should pass from potency into reality, so that he might receive the reward of good deeds, since good wishes by themselves are not rewarded. Know that God only tries the righteous. When He knows that he will obey, and wishes to justify him (or demonstrate his righteousness), He bids him do something by way of trial. But He does not try the wicked, because they are disobedient. Now, all the temptations in the Bible are for the good of the tempted."

DR. GINSBERG.

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The Preacher's Finger-Post.

WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT?

"The burden of Dumah. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come."—Isaiah xxi. 11, 12.

IN the first ten verses of this chapter the fall of Babylon is vividly predicted. The hardy soldiers of Media and Persia break in upon the kingdom of Belshazzar, and capture it. In the eleventh verse we have the burden of Dumah or Idumea. In the prophetic vision before us, the prophet hears a man from Mount Seir calling unto him to know the signs of the night; the prophet, under the figure of a watchman, replies, and his reply has been fulfilled—the

morning came, and also the night, for Petra, the capital of ancient Dumah, is now only a ruin.

Let us take this prophetic incident as a type of general spiritual truth, and consider—

I. THE WATCHMAN AS TYPICAL OF EVERY TRUE AMBASSADOR OF THE CROSS.

(a) *He occupied vantage ground.* He was selected for the office—placed in an appropriate position—where, unhindered and unmolested, he could carry on his observations, and prosecute his work. (b) *He possessed knowledge of the ground he surveyed*—a mere enthusiast would not do, nor a novice, nor an enemy—a patriot would be the best, with a clear head and a warm heart. (c) *He would expect*

implicit obedience to his cries. If he said "All well!" people might rest; if, "To arms!" people must be up. Apply these points to the office of the Christian ministry.

II. THE INQUIRER OF THE WATCHMAN AS TYPICAL OF THE ANXIOUS SEEKER AFTER SALVATION.

(a) *He was painfully conscious of the darkness.* "What of the night?"—So every awakened sinner feels the darkness of ignorance, and danger, and guilt, and wonders what of the night—how, and when will it end? (b) *He was anxiously desirous of the light.* He would that the morning were come—he longs to see the opening light, and to feel the warmth of the rising sun: so the anxious seeker after salvation longs for the Light of the World—the light of the glorious Gospel to shine into his heart.

III. THE ANSWER OF THE WATCHMAN AS TYPICAL OF THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE SOUL IN RELIGION.

(a) *The morning cometh*—the morning of day, of newness of life, of glorious opportunity. (b) *Also the night.* The day will not last for ever, let us work while it is called day, the night cometh—of rest and reward, if we continue seeking, "enquire,"—repenting, "return,"—believing, "come." If we are careless the night of desolation and death will come.

F. W. BROWN.

DAYS OF YOUTH.

"The days of thy youth."—Eccles. xii. 1.

THIS is a remarkable chapter; it gives an allegorical representation of human life, which is very striking and solemn. We have here—

First: *The successive stages of human life.* (1.) The growing stage: "Days of youth." (2.) The declining stage: "The evil days." (3.) The dissolving stage: "Man goeth to his long home." We have here—

Secondly: *The primary obligation of human life.* To "remember the Creator." An obligation which implies not only a knowledge of the Creator, but a heartfelt sympathy with Him. As we can never remember an object of which we know nothing, we shall never remember, to any purpose, an object in which we have no interest. This remembrance of the Creator should be intelligent, loving, practical, permanent. We have here—

Thirdly: *The choicest period of human life.* "The days of thy youth."

I. The days of youth are days of peculiar ILLUSION. Some men write fictitious books, most men lead fictitious lives; they walk in a vain show. This is especially the case with youth. They live in romance. Their theory of life bears but little resemblance to stern reality. Their

blooming landscape is but a mirage creation of their own fancy. Look at their views—

First: As to life's *happiness*. Most youths fancy that their lives will be far more sunny and serene than the lives of their parents. In the home which they have painted for themselves, there is no cloud, no storm, no blight. But how different they find the reality, as they move on through the different stages to old age. Look at their views—

Secondly: As to life's *length*. Most young people put their death a long way further off than it is; they calculate on reaching their three score years and ten, at least. But how few do so? Not one in ten. Look at their views—

Thirdly: As to life's *improvability*. Most youths feel that they *ought* to be religious, and they adjourn the work of spiritual culture till a time in the future, which they consider will be more convenient. But such a time never comes. Ah! youth lives in a fictitious world: it is the baseless fabric of a vision. Its views of stern life are as untrue to the reality as a dream of the night.

II. The days of youth are days of peculiar TEMPTATION. In every period of life man meets with temptation. Seductive influences lie about the path of all. But there are temptations peculiar to youth.

First: *Credulity*. They are unsuspicious and confiding,

and with minds but partially informed with the facts of existence, and untrained to the weighing of evidence, they are ready to accept almost any plausible proposition, especially when it is agreeable to their desires.

Secondly: *Carnality*. In the first stages of human life, animalism is the regnant power. All the pleasures are the pleasures of the sense. Sensual music, sensual beauty—all sensual. Nothing but a vigorous intellectual development and high moral culture can lift it from this state and bring it under control of spiritual realities.

Thirdly: *Vanity*. The conceit of youth is proverbial. They estimate themselves, not by the best examples of human life, still less by the true ideal, but by their own wishes. They are vain of their appearance, their talents, if they have no wealth or ancestry.

Thirdly: *Gregariousness*. Strong is the tendency in young natures to follow and to blend with others. Young people are like sheep; they like to live and move in flocks.

Now these are peculiar temptations.

III. The days of youth are days of peculiar VALUE. Whilst all the years and hours of man's short life are of priceless value, the time of youth is pre-eminently precious; its hours are golden. It is pre-eminently valuable—

First: Because of its *fleet-*

ness. "Youth," says John Foster, "is not like a new garment which we can keep fresh by wearing sparingly, we must wear it daily, and it wears fast away. It is a flower that soon withereth." Our youthful days have passed away so rapidly that, before we were aware, we were enwrapt with the cares and anxieties of middle age.

Secondly: Because of *its possibilities*. The possibilities of flowers, fruit, affluent orchards, and waving fields of golden harvest, are all shut up in the spring; so it is with youth, the greatness of manhood is in youth. He who wishes to be a great citizen, orator, saint, must begin in youth.*

CONCLUSION: "Remember then, young man, thy Creator in the days of thy youth:" now is the time.

THE PLEIADES, OR DELIGHTFUL INFLUENCES OF SPRINGTIDE.

"Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades?"—Job xxxviii. 31.

THE Pleiades are a well-known cluster of stars in the constellation of Taurus. The Ancients were in the habit of determining their seasons by the rising and setting of certain constellations. The Pleiades were regarded as the cardinal constellations of spring. These seven stars

appear about the middle of April, and hence are associated with the return of spring, the season of sweet influences. The Hebrew word is derived from a word signifying delights.

The appeal, therefore, of the Almighty to Job means this: "Canst thou prevent the delightful influences of spring falling on the earth?" The influences of spring are delightful in many ways:—

I. AS TEMPORAL MINISTRIES. These influences come to bring great blessings to man, as a tenant of the earth.

First: *Supplies of Food*. They come to mollify the earth, fertilize the soil, germinate the seed out of which come the material provisions for man and beast.

Secondly: *Pleasures to the Senses*. Spring mantles the world with a thousand robes of beauty, all with endless variety of hue and shape. It also sets the harp of nature to music, wakes the forest into song, makes the air vocal with sweet sounds.

Thirdly: *Exhilarates the Spirit*. The animal spirit of man seems to sympathize with all nature in spring, and rises from dormancy and darkness into vitality and sunshine.

The influences of spring are delightful—

II. AS DIVINE MANIFESTATIONS. Springtide is a new revelation of God. It reveals:

First: *The profusion of His vital energy*. Every spot teems

*See illustrations in "Pulpit and Handmaids."

with a new existence, and every new life is from Him. It is a drop from the fountain of life.

Secondly: The *wonderful tastefulness of God*. Spring brings a universe of fresh beauties to the eye. Every fresh hue and form are from Him.

Thirdly: The *calm ease with which He works*. How quietly He pours forth those oceans of new life that are now rolling over the earth.

Fourthly: The *regularity of His procedure*. For 6,000 years spring has never failed to come.

The influences of spring are delightful—

III. AS INSTRUCTIVE EMBLEMS:—

First: *Spring is an emblem of human life*. Both have vast capabilities of improvement; both are remarkably changeable; both are fraught with fallacious promises.

Secondly: *Spring is an emblem of spiritual renovation*. The Bible looks at it in this light. Isa. lxi. 11; Ps. lxxxv. 11, (1.) The new spiritual life is like the spring in the season from which it has emerged. It comes out of chaotic winter. (2.) The new spiritual life is like spring in the tenacity with which the past strives to keep its hold. How reluctant winter seems to give way. (3.) The new spiritual life, like spring, tends to a perfect future. The power of winter will gradually

give way; summer will come, and then the golden autumn.

Thirdly: *Spring is an emblem of the general resurrection*. The Bible looks at it in this light. 1 Cor. xv. 36, 41. (1.) Spring life is a resuscitation; it is not properly a new creation, it grows out of the past. Every resurrection body will be an outcome of the body that lived before. (2.) Spring life is a resuscitation from an apparently extinct life. "That which thou sowest is not quickened unless it die." (3.) Spring life is a resuscitation against which many antecedent objections might have been raised. So with the resurrection of the body.*

Broken up is ruthless winter,
Spring-tide scenes are come again,
Skies are clearing, earth is budding
'Neath the sunbeams and the rain.
O Thou God, we will adore Thee
In the highest human strain!
More and more for evermore!

Glorious spring, its forms are welcome,
Welcome, too, its choral strains,—
Welcome in the woods and meadows,
On the mountains and the plains.
Great Creator, we would praise Thee
With a love that never wanes,
Never, never, nevermore!

Spring has come for many ages,
Quick'ning earth and bright'ning sky,
In its thousand advents proving
Nature's Lord can never lie.
Wake, O wake that spring within us
That shall never fade or die,
Never, never, nevermore!

Men of every tribe and nation
Into songs of praise awake;
God is present in all seasons,
Works in nature for our sake,
Raise your souls in high devotion
And the hymns of angels take,
Now, and ever evermore!

* For further amplification of these remarks see *Homilist*, First Series, vol. vi., page 203.

BIBLICAL DIFFICULTIES.

"In which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction."—2 Pet. iii. 16.

THIS text leads us to consider Biblical difficulties in two aspects:—

I. AS ACKNOWLEDGED by the INSPIRED. Here Peter acknowledges the difficulties connected with the writings of his inspired and apostolic brother Paul. Peter does not find fault with the obscurity of his brother's style, nor does he even express surprise at finding in Paul's writings "things hard to be understood." He seems, indeed, to refer to them as a matter of course. This fact is a lesson to two opposite classes—

First: To those who *reject the Bible on account of its difficulties*. The Bible does not profess to be a book easily understood. It does not profess to be so simple as to come within your comprehension. If it did, you might reject it on the ground of its untruthfulness. Its difficulties are—(1.) Consistent with its *character*. It is a revelation of the Infinite directed to the finite; and were no difficulties found in it there would be presumptive argument against its Divinity. Antecedently, unprejudiced reason would have anticipated difficulties in connexion with such a re-

velation, and would not the mysteries of nature which crowd around us materially strengthen such anticipation? (2.) Consistent with its *intention*. The Bible is an educational book. The school book which the student has mastered ceases to be educational to him, and as soon as the world comprehends the Bible the Divine document will become obsolete. This fact is a lesson—

Secondly: To those who *arrogate a thorough comprehension of the Bible*. There have been those arrogant theologians in all ages, who have impiously avowed their thorough knowledge of the whole of Divine truth. They profess to have weighed its mountains in their balance, and to have held its oceans in the hollow of their hands. And they have treated those of their fellow-men who could not accept their teachings with a heartless cruelty and a haughty contempt. It would be well if those men had remembered, and if such men would still remember, that St. Peter, the inspired Apostle, the man to whom Christ gave the keys of truth, found in the Scripture "things hard to be understood."

Biblical difficulties are presented—

II. AS PERVERTED by the UNGODLY.

First: The *perversers* are here described. "Which they that are unlearned and unstable

wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." The "unlearned" here points, not to the intellectually illiterate, but to the spiritually ignorant. A man may be an illustrious scholar in an intellectual sense, and a fool in spiritual matters—2 Tim. ii. 23. The "unstable" here are those whose judgments have not been fixed by an unbounded confidence in the cardinal verities of the Gospel—the *spiritually ignorant* and the *fickle*—and they constitute, perhaps, the vast majority of the race; and these are the people that pervert the Scriptures..

Secondly: The *perversion* is here indicated. "They wrest"—pervert—*στρεβλοῦσιν*. The word here used occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It is derived from a word meaning a windlass, winch, instrument of torture (*στρεβλή*), and means to roll or wind on a windlass; then to wrench or turn away as by the force of a windlass; and then to wrest or pervert. It implies a turning out of the way by the application of force. Here the meaning is, that they apply those portions of the Bible to a purpose for which they were never intended."

Thirdly: Their *destiny* is here stated. "Their own destruction." What is spiritual destruction? The destruction of all the blessings that

can make existence worth having—life, peace, hope, &c. Such is the perversion of those difficulties, but what is the proper use of them?

(1.) They should superinduce humility. Before their majesty the intellect should fall prostrate. (2.) They should stimulate intellectual inquiry. They challenge thought,—their oceans ask you to navigate them, their hills to climb their summit, their mines to dig and be made rich. (3.) They should point to a future life. These difficulties are the prophecy of a time of future enlightenment.

CONCLUSION.—The things "hard to be understood" in Scripture are there as the necessity of its nature; there as the seals of its Divinity; and there as the means of human discipline, humbling pride, stimulating thought, and pointing to a future state.

"IS NOT THIS THE CHRIST?"

"Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did. Is not this the Christ?"—John iv. 29.

THESE words imply:—

I. FAITH IN JESUS AS A MAN OF THE WIDEST HUMAN SYMPATHIES. Describe the meeting and talk on the part of Jesus. What tact and condescension—what patience and gentleness—what truth, and sweet attractive grace. Truly He shows that He knew the way to the heart, that He was wise

to win souls to God. He does not wait for the woman to speak, He begins the conversation Himself. He does not address her authoritatively, He asks a simple favour. He does not accost her haughtily, as if he were of a higher race. He puts himself on her level; He condescends to her weakness; He touches her where she is susceptible. And all for love—to bring her back to God. How different from what she had looked for!—from what she had been accustomed to! —“No dealings between the Jews and the Samaritans.” Others would have felt like the disciples, v. 27. Prejudices as to sex, country, religion, and such like, would have held them aloof, and checked the genial current of their souls. Not so Jesus. Infinitely above all this. He was no respecter of persons. His meat and His drink was to do the will of the Father, who sent Him. He came to seek the lost. To save a soul from death was to Him the sweetest refreshment and the divinest joy. And what He was, He is.

“Though now ascended up on high,
He bends on earth a brother's
eye;
Partaker of the human name,
He knows the frailty of our
frame.”

II. FAITH IN JESUS AS A
MAN ENDOWED WITH PROPHE-
TIC INSIGHT. In the Temple
there were diverse courts.

First, there was the Court of the Gentiles, which was free to all. Then there was an inner court, which was limited to Jews. Then there was a still more sacred court, which was open only to the priests. And last and most sacred of all, there was the Holy of Holies, which the High Priest alone was permitted to enter, and that only “once every year, not without blood.” It is somewhat the same with the heart. It has its courts. The outermost is free to all, others are only open to dear friends, and the innermost and most secret of all, no mortal eye beholds, but only the eye of God. Now, this poor woman felt as to *her* heart, that this stranger had right of entrance to it; and that He had searched its windings, and knew all its secrets, as if He were God. Therefore she cries with wonder and awe, like a guilty thing surprised, “I perceive that thou art a prophet,” and a little after proclaims her faith in Him as the Messiah and Saviour. One can only tell what he knows. The fact that Jesus had told her so much, convinced her that He knew all. As Stier expounds, “*Her conscience had heard ‘all things’ disclosed, in the disclosure of one.*” The power of Jesus to read the heart is in accordance with Reason. He was perfect. Sin had not clouded His mind, nor perverted His judgment. He

knew what was in man, and as God all hearts were open to Him. He knew all their intricacies and secrets, as the maker knows the machine he has made (cf. Jer. xvii. 10; Ps. xlv. 21; cxxxix. 2; 1 Chr. xxviii. 9).

Illustrated by Scripture.—For examples—cf. the people, Matt. ix. 4; the Scribes and Pharisees, Luke v. 22; xi. 17; the Disciples—Nathaniel, John i. 47-49; Peter, John i. 42; xiii. 38; xxi. 17; Judas, John xiii. 18-27.

Confirmed by Experience.—Who that has had real intimacy and converse with Jesus but must have often been constrained to say, "He told me all things." In the providences of life, especially in reading and hearing the Word of God, we feel that the eye of Jesus is upon us, and that he is reading us through and through.

"Eye of God's Word! where'er we turn,

Ever upon us; Thy keen gaze
Can all the depths of sin discern.

Unravel every bosom's maze.

Who that has felt Thy glance of dread

Thrill through his heart's remotest cells,

About his path, about his bed,

Can doubt what spirit in Thee dwells."

Keble.

III. FAITH IN JESUS, AS A MAN CHARGED WITH A DIVINE MISSION.

Every man has a mission, but there is only one Messiah. Every man has a work to do

for God, but there is only one Redeemer and Saviour of souls. There may be many pretenders. Again and again the cry has been made, "Lo, here is Christ," or, "I am He." But in truth there is, and there never has been, but *One* to whom the name really belongs, and He has vindicated His right to the name by doing the work of which that name was the sign and pledge. This woman, like Andrew, had found the Messiah. Hence she cries, "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did. *Is not this the Christ?*" Mark here:

1. *Hope of the Christ.* Founded on God's promises—cf. Gen. iii. 15, xii. 1, Deut. xviii. 18, &c.
2. *Yearning for the Christ.* Bitter need—the burden and the shame of sin—the agony of helplessness prompt the cry, *How long!* Come, O Saviour. Surely there will be redress—the restitution of all things, when Thou comest.
3. *The conviction that Jesus was the Christ.* Her faith seems to have been based mainly on her personal experience—"He told me all that ever I did." With many such a conviction would work alarm—would repel rather than attract. Job speaks of this; he says of sinners, guilty of the same vile deeds as had defiled this poor woman—"If one know them, they are in the terrors of the shadow of death."—Job. xxiv. 17. But her conviction of the Divine

insight of Jesus, was associated with such facts—such truth and sweetness, and graciousness, such deep interest in her welfare, such wonderful love—as won her very heart, and awakened hope instead of fear, and joy instead of sorrow. *He knew all—yes, all.* And yet He had not scorned her; had not turned from her with loathing; had not cast her off as a foul and worthless thing, but had spoken to her with deeper earnestness and love. Who, but the very Christ Himself—the hope of the low and the lost—could have dealt so with her. So it ever is. As to other teachers, even the greatest, get to know them well and you discover defects. They are but men after all. And let them get to know *you*—all your weaknesses, and follies, and sins—and which of them will bear with you? In the supreme moment they fail like a broken reed. But not so Jesus; the better you know Him the more great and sacred He becomes. The more intimate your converse with Him, the mightier your faith in His goodness and love. More and more He gathers to Himself your trust and devotion. If at first He was but a man or a prophet, soon His full glory dawns upon your soul, and with adoring love you proclaim Him as the Christ—you prostrate yourself before Him as your Saviour and your God.

How much is included be-

tween the simple question—“Give me to drink,” and the sublime announcement, “I that speak unto thee am He.” So it often is in the converse of the soul with Jesus, especially in the days of “first love.” What wondrous discoveries are then made. What may be but a brief hour in time’s record, is eternity to the heart. The ravishing glimpses then got of the glory of Jesus, are a joy for ever. “He that believeth hath the witness in himself.”

IV. FAITH IN JESUS, AS A MAN, CHALLENGING THE HOMAGE OF ALL HEARTS.

Here is the true missionary spirit. “Come, see.” Look at facts. Judge for yourselves. Faith that is backed by personal experience is bold. It courts inquiry. It has nothing to conceal—nothing to dread. Honest seekers will find the truth. There is a self-evidencing power in the Gospel. “*I see that the Bible fits into every fold of the human heart,*” said Vaughan. “I am a man, and I believe it to be God’s book, because it it is man’s book.” Let us take up the call of the woman of Samaria. “*Come, see,*” *Jesus, in the Gospels, On the cross, In the triumphs of Christianity.*

“*Come, see,*” the beauty of His character, the perfectness of His atonement, the Divinity of His Spirit.

“*Come, see,*” and you, too, will have your burden taken off, and find peace.

"Come, see," and you in your turn will become a messenger of good news to others.

"Come, see," and so the glorious work will go on; till not Jews and Samaritans only, but all kindreds of the earth shall be brought under the

gracious spell, and "at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that He is Lord to the glory of God the Father."—Amen.

WILLIAM FORSYTH, A.M.
Abernethy.

Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. CCCIII.)

Subject: WRONG TESTIMONY
AGAINST NEIGHBOURS.

"Be not a witness against thy neighbour without cause; and deceive not with thy lips. Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work."—Prov. xxiv. 28, 29.

THESE words imply that our neighbour—our fellow man—may be placed in a position where our testimony concerning him may be required. It might be in the social circle, in the Court of Judicature, or in the Church Assembly, where our testimony is demanded. The verses suggest three kinds of wrong testimony:—

I. A CAUSELESS one. "Be not a witness against thy neighbour without cause." When a man gives his testimony against his neighbour, when it is not required for either of the three following things, viz: the good of society, self-exculpation, or as a matter of public justice, he does it "without cause." And there is much of such testimony in society, and this is nothing more than idle scandal. There are those who are, for no

service, either to themselves or to society, testifying of the defects and infirmities of their neighbours. This is a wrong which the Bible reprobates. Another wrong testimony is—

II. A FALSE one. "And deceive not with thy lips." If it is wrong to bear testimony to the defects of your neighbour, when it is not really required to do so on moral grounds, it must be still more wrong to bear testimony to conduct of which you know your neighbour is not guilty: and yet men do so. There is a deal of "bearing false witness against our neighbour" in society. Slander is prevalent in all circles.

"Slander lives upon succession,
For ever housed when once it gets
possession."—*Shakespeare.*

There is another wrong testimony—

III. A REVENGEFUL one. "Say not I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work." Revenge is a passion strongly prohibited and reprobated both in the Old and

New Testament. "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord: I will repay." "Slander," says Robertson, "is compared to poison." "The tongue is an unruly member, full of deadly poison." The deadliest poisons are those for which no test is known: there are poisons so destructive that a single drop insinuated into the veins produces death in three seconds, and yet no chemical science can separate that virus from the contaminated blood, and show the metallic particles of poison glittering palpably, and say, "Behold it is there."

"The world with calumny abounds;
The whitest virtue slander wounds:
There are whose joy is, night and day,
To talk a character away:
Eager from rout to rout they haste,
To blast the generous and the chaste,
And hunting reputation down,
Proclaim their triumphs through the town."—*Pope*.

(No. CCCIV.)

Subject: IDLENESS.

"I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man."—Prov. xxiv. 30-34.

WE have here indolence portrayed by the hand of a master; and as it stands before us on the canvas, certain facts strike us concerning it; namely, that it is *foolish, procrastinating, and ruinous*.

I. IT IS FOOLISH. Solomon characterizes this indolent man as one "void of understanding." Wherein do you see this man's

folly? *In the flagrant neglect of his own interests.* Unlike the condition of millions who have not one yard of green sod which they can call their own, this man held a little estate in his possession. He had a "field" and a "vineyard," and upon the cultivation of this depended his bread. But he neglected it, and it was grown over with thorns. Morally this vineyard may signify our spiritual natures, with all their faculties and potential powers, and which it is both our manifest interest and bounden duty to cultivate. There is one noticeable point of distinction between material and spiritual cultivation. You may cultivate your *field by proxy*, but you can only cultivate *your soul yourself*.

II. IT IS PROCRASTINATING. Solomon observed that indolence in this man led to constant procrastination. "I saw and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep." To the indolent man duty is always for the morrow. The idea of working is not given up, but postponed from day to day; and the longer it is postponed the more indisposed the mind grows for its performance. It is always "a little more," or always looking to a "more convenient season."

III. IT IS RUINOUS. First: *Consider the wretched condition to which his estate was reduced.* "Lo, it was all grown over with thorns," &c. It might have waved in golden grain, it might have been a scene of loveliness and plenty; but it is an unsightly wilderness, unprotected, open to the foot of every

intruder. It is a solemn fact that ruin comes, not by cultivation, but by neglect. Your garden will soon become a wilderness if you neglect it. Heaven's kind arrangement this, to stimulate labour. It is so with the soul. You need not strive to ruin yourselves—do *nothing* and you will be damned. Secondly: *Consider the utter destitution to which it must inevitably conduct.* By this indolence, "thy poverty shall come as one that travel-*leth*," &c. Two things are suggested by the words. (1.) *That the ruin is gradual in its approach.* "Thy poverty shall come." It does not burst on you at once, like a thunder-storm. The punishment of the indolent farmer takes all the months from spring-time to harvest to approach him. Full and adequate retribution does not come at once. "There is a treasuring up." It is coming now "as one that travel-*leth*;" it is on the road. (2.) *The ruin is terrible in its consummation.* "As an armed man." It will seize you as with the grasp of an indignant warrior. Indolence brings ruin.

Brother, thou hast a momentous work to do; thou hast to cultivate the wilderness of thy nature; thou hast to repair the moral fences of thy soul. In other words, thou hast to rebuild the ruined temple of thy being. Thou hast no time to lose; thou hast slept already too long. "*Resolve and do*" at once.

Lay firmly every stone; long years may
be,

And stormy winds may rend, ere all be
done;

But lay the first—thou mayst not live to
see

To-morrow's sun.

(No. CCCV.)

Subject: SOLOMON'S THREE
THOUSAND PROVERBS.

"These are also Proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out."—Prov. xxv. 1.

"AT this point commences the *fourth* division of this Book, extending to the close of the 29th chapter. In 1 Kings iv. 32, it is said of Solomon, in enumerating the particulars of his extraordinary wisdom, 'he spoke three thousand proverbs.' And what he is then said to have *spoken*, it is evidently designed to be understood, he committed to writing. The full collection of these sententious maxims of wisdom had been kept, it would appear, in the possession of the house of David, or of the kings of Judah. The selection in the preceding part of the Book had been made by Solomon himself. Those which follow were added in the time of good King Hezekiah; by the direction, there is every reason to suppose, of that exemplary prince, for the religious benefit of his people. 'The *men* of Hezekiah' stands in the Septuagint translation, 'the *friends* of Hezekiah'—meaning, in all likelihood, Isaiah and other inspired men. Like the Proverbs which precede, these must be regarded, by their admission into the Jewish canon, of Scripture, as having the sanction, not only of the wisdom and experience of Solomon but of Divine authority: and we owe them the same reverential regard as we owe to other parts of God's Word."

The text suggests three subjects of thought—

I. The FERTILITY OF THE
HUMAN MIND WHEN ENGAGED

IN THE SERVICE OF GOD. "These are also Proverbs of Solomon." Elsewhere we are told that the Proverbs of Solomon were three thousand in number, besides one thousand and five and his various writings on cedars, beasts, fowls, creeping things, &c.: 1 Kings iv. 32. Three thousand Proverbs! not mere *words*—This means mental fertility. Mere literature is easy; writing words in profusion does not mean fertility of soul. Indeed, as a rule, the most fluent in language, the most infertile in thought. Three thousand Proverbs! not mere *ideas*. A man may have a boundless profusion of ideas and yet a poor soul. But Proverbs are axioms. They mean thought crystallized. One true Proverb may embody the essence of a thousand thoughts. Thoughts are foliage and blossom: Proverbs the fruit. Truly, wonderfully fertile is the human soul, especially when engaged in Divine service. It is not like the fruit tree. The more fruit the tree produces the more it exhausts itself, and the less capable of producing it becomes, until at last its fruitfulness is entirely exhausted. Not so with the mind: the more it produces, the more its producing capacity increases.

The text suggests—

II. The DEPARTMENTAL SYSTEM IN THE REMEDIAL WORK WHICH HEAVEN HAS ENTRUSTED TO MEN. "Which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied

out." Solomon struck them off from the anvil of his genius, but the men of Hezekiah gathered them up and enshrined them in literature. This they did 300 years afterwards. Some men think, and their thoughts are not worth recording, either by themselves or by others; the sooner they are forgotten by the universe the better. Some men think, and their thoughts are valuable, but cannot write; they have neither the aptitude nor disposition for authorship. Some men can write, but cannot think; they will scribble off yards of nothing in a few hours. These men of Hezekiah, whether they could think or not, laid hold of the thoughts of the thinker, and embodied them in imperishable language; and for this we thank them. God employs both the originator and the copyist—the thinker and the registrar. Would that all great and holy thinkers had faithful scribes as Solomon had, and as One greater than Solomon had. God gives to every man that work which he is best able to accomplish. One man labours and another enters into his labours.

III. The CARE OF PROVIDENCE OVER THE DEVELOPMENTS OF DIVINE TRUTH. Who raised up these men, 300 years after Solomon, to record his thoughts, but God? God's Providence is seen in the *production* of Divine MSS., in their *preservation*, their *collation*, and *publication*.

The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

YOUTH HOOD.

(See page 303).

"Almost everything that is great has been done by youth. For life in general there is but one decree. Youth is a blunder, manhood a struggle, old age a regret. Do not suppose that I hold that youth is genius; all that is genius, when young, is Divine. Why, the greatest captains of ancient and modern times both conquered Italy at five and twenty! Youth, extreme youth, overthrew the Persian Empire. Don John of Austria won Lepanto at twenty-five—the greatest battle of modern times. Had it not been for the jealousy of Philip, the next year he would have been Emperor of Mauritania. Gatlon de Foix was only twenty-two when he stood victor on the plain of Ravenna. Every one remembers Condé and Rocroy at the same age. Gustavus Adolphus died at thirty-eight. Look at his captains, the wonderful Duke of Weimar, only thirty-six when he died. Bainer himself, after all his miracles, died at forty-five. Cortes was little more than thirty when he gazed upon the golden cupolas of Mexico. When Maurice of Saxony died at thirty-two, all Europe acknowledged the loss of the greatest captain and the profoundest statesman of the age. Then there is Nelson, Clive. But these are warriors, and, perhaps, you may think there were greater things than war. I do not; I worship the Lord of Hosts. But take the most

illustrious achievements of civil prudence. Innocent III., the greatest of the Popes, was the despot of Christendom at thirty-seven. John de Medici was a cardinal at fifteen, and Guiccardini tells us, baffled with his statecraft Ferdinand of Arragon himself; he was Pope as Leo X. at thirty-seven. Luther robbed even him of his richest province at thirty-five. Take Ignatius Loyola and John Wesley, they worked with young brains. Ignatius was only thirty when he made his pilgrimage, and wrote the *Spiritual Exercises*. Pascal wrote a great work at sixteen, the greatest of Frenchmen, and died at thirty-seven.

"Ah! that fatal thirty-seven, which reminds me of Byron, greater even as a man than writer. Was it experience that guided the pencil of Raphael when he painted the palaces of Rome? He died, too, at thirty-seven. Richelieu was Secretary of State at thirty-one. Well, then, there are Bolingbroke and Pitt, both ministers before other men leave cricket. Grotius was in great practice at seventeen, and Attorney-General at twenty-four. And Acquavia was general of the Jesuits, ruled every cabinet in Europe, and colonized America, before he was thirty-seven. What a career! It is needless to multiply instances. The history of heroes is the history of youth."—D'ISRAELI.

"The human soul in youth is not a machine of which you can polish the cogs with any help

or brick-dust near at hand, and, having got it into working order, and good and oiled serviceableness, start your immortal locomotive at twenty-five years old, or thirty, express for the Strait Gate on the Narrow Road. The whole period of youth is one essentially of formation, edification, instruction. I use the words with their weight in them, in taking of stores, establishment in vital habits, hopes and faiths. There is not an hour of it but is trembling with destinies; not a moment of which, once past, the appointed work can ever be done again, or the neglected blow struck on the cold iron. Take your vase of Venice glass out of the furnace, and strew chaff over it in its transparent heat, and recover *that* to its clearness and envied glory, when the north wind has blown upon it; but do not think to strew chaff over the child afresh from God's presence, and to bring heavenly colours back to him, at least in this world."—
RUSKIN.

LORD BROUGHAM AND A FUTURE STATE.

THE following story appears in *The Life and Times of Lord Brougham*, written by himself, just published by Messrs. Blackwood and Co.:—"A most remarkable thing happened to me—so remarkable that I must tell the story from the beginning. After I left the High School I went with G——, my most intimate friend, to attend the classes in the University. There was no divinity class, but we fre-

quently in our walks discussed and, speculated upon many grave subjects—among others, on the immortality of the soul, and on a future state. This question, and the possibility, I will not say of ghosts walking, but of the dead appearing to the living, were subjects of much speculation; and we actually committed the folly of drawing up an agreement, written with our blood, to the effect that whichever of us died first should appear to the other, and thus solve any doubts we had entertained of the 'life after death.' After we had finished our classes at the college, G—— went to India, having got an appointment there in the civil service. He seldom wrote to me, and after the lapse of a few years I had almost forgotten him; moreover, his family having little connexion with Edinburgh, I seldom saw or heard anything of them, or of him through them, so that all the old schoolboy intimacy had died out, and I had nearly forgotten his existence. I had taken, as I have said, a warm bath; and while lying in it, and enjoying the comfort of the heat after the late freezing I had undergone, I turned my head round, looking towards the chair on which I had deposited my clothes, as I was about to get out of the bath. On the chair sat G——, looking calmly at me. How I got out of the bath I know not, but on recovering my senses I

found myself sprawling on the floor. The apparition, or whatever it was, that had taken the likeness of G——, had disappeared. This vision produced such a shock that I had no inclination to talk about it, or to speak about it even to Stuart; but the impression it made upon me was too vivid to be easily forgotten; and so strongly was I affected by it, that I have here written down the whole history with the date, 19th December, and all the particulars, as they are now fresh before me. No doubt I had fallen asleep; and that the appearance presented so distinctly to my eyes was a dream, I cannot for a moment doubt; yet for years I had had no communication with G——, nor had there been anything to recall him to my recollection; nothing had taken place during our Swedish travels

either connected with G—— or with India, or with anything relating to him, or to any member of his family. I recollected quickly enough our old discussion, and the bargain we had made. I could not discharge from my mind the impression that G—— must have died, and that his appearance to me was to be received by me as a proof of a future state." This was on December 19th, 1799. In October 1862, Lord Brougham added as a postscript:—"I have just been copying out from my journal the account of this strange dream: *Certissima mortis imago!* And now to finish the story begun about sixty years since. Soon after my return to Edinburgh there arrived a letter from India announcing G——'s death! and stated that he had died on the 19th December!"

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

HUMAN POWER IN THE DIVINE LIFE: OR THE ACTIVE POWERS OF THE MIND IN RELATION TO RELIGION. By Rev. NICHOLAS BISHOP, M.A.
London: Hodder & Stoughton, 27 Paternoster Row.

"The design of this work," says the author, "is to consider the Active Powers of the Mind in their relation to the Divine Life, their adaptation

to the requirements of the Divine Law, and to the sense of Human Responsibility." The work is divided into ten chapters, the subjects of which are:—Preliminary considerations, human power in repentance, human power in faith, human power in conversion, human power in sanctification, human power in Christian perfection, limits of human power in the perfection of the Divine life, human power in preaching, human power in prayer, and human power in relation to Divine providence. In each of these chapters we have the discussion of a large variety of subjects relating to the general theme. The purpose and plan of the work are excellent, and although the development is far too sketchy and brief to give full philosophic satisfaction, it is all the more suggestive on that account. The author's mental philosophy may, of course in certain points, be debateable, and some of his theological positions may be open to question, but his ability is undoubted and distinguished. The work is full of vigorous thoughts on vital topics, set forth in language clear, fresh, and strong.

THE EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL TO GALATIANS. A NEW TRANSLATION, WITH CRITICAL NOTES AND DOCTRINAL LESSONS. By JOHN H. GODWIN. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 27 Paternoster Row.

"SEVERAL commentaries," says the author, "on this Epistle have been lately published, but they are chiefly for those who can use the original text. This is designed also for others, and is therefore made intelligible throughout to English readers. The language of St. Paul being colloquial rather than literary, sentences which grammarians may deem faulty are to be expected. His letters are speeches, and have the irregularities which are not improper in popular discourse, when they are natural and forcible. For the same reason the interpretation of his words must often be obtained from his own writings, and the evidence given by the subject and purpose of his statement is of more importance than that which is afforded by the usage of other writers. Common sense and Christian sympathy are the principal requisites for the understanding of St. Paul, and the occasions are few in which considerations which can only be appreciated by the learned are of much consequence." Those who have not such works on this Epistle as those of Prof. Lightfoot, Bishop Ellicot, Dr. Eadie, &c., would do well to procure this little volume, which contains nothing remarkably fresh. Indeed the author, in a foot-note, states that beside his obligations to Dean Alford, Dr. Eadie, Prof. Jowitt, and Dr. Lightfoot, he owes "*innumerable*" obligations to other sources. So that as the book is so small, and the obligations so innumerable, we may suppose that there is not much of the author himself in it. We presume that the practical lessons which are drawn from the passages, however, must be ascribed entirely to the author and their triteness is really amusing. For example—the

following are the lessons drawn from chap. ii. 11-14—which we take as the very *first* on which our eyes rested:—

- (1.) "The wisest and best may judge and act wrongly."
- (2.) "Many are led astray by an improper sympathy."
- (3.) "The promotion of Christian truth and love is the highest rule."
- (4.) "Reproof should be given and received with gentleness."

How profound! How keen and penetrating the vision to make such discoveries!

THE TREASURY OF DAVID. By C. H. SPURGEON. Vol. ii. Ps. xxvii. to lii. London: Passmore and Alabaster, 18 Paternoster Row.

To the first volume of this work we have already called the attention of our readers, and heartily commended it. The author has pursued the same plan as that adopted in the former volume, and we think the plan a good one. The one great fault we find with this work on the Psalms (a fault which attaches to most of the commentaries with which we are acquainted) is the endeavour to make a confessedly imperfect man appear always good, and even Messianic in his imprecatory utterances. We think this is unfair in interpretation, and detrimental to Biblical morality. We wish Mr. Spurgeon would employ his vigorous common sense in looking earnestly and independently into this matter. This book not only shows, on the part of the author, very great ability as a Biblical expositor, but amazing industry. Here are extracts from nearly 600 writers, and some of them are the brightest names in the long roll of sacred authorship. As we are going through the Psalms ourselves, we are prepared to appreciate Mr. Spurgeon's labours, and we shall not fail to make the best use we can of them for the benefit of our readers. Trusting that the author's life and health may be preserved to finish a work which he has so well begun, we repeat our hearty recommendation of the production.

GOSPEL UNITIES. By REV. JOHN RICHARDSON, M.A. London: Wm. Macintosh, 24 Paternoster Row.—An excellent little work is this, adapted to awaken spiritual thought, and to improve the moral temper of Christians. GEMS FROM THE CORAL ISLANDS. By Rev. WM. GILL. London: Elliot Stock, 62 Paternoster Row.—A work in the ninth edition, and to which we have often called the attention of our readers, requires only to have its new issue announced. LIFE IN CHRIST: A BRIEF MEMOIR OF JOHN LOUDON, OF STANE. By Rev. JOHN WHITSON. Glasgow: T. D. Morison, 8 Bath Street.—A brief memoir of an excellent man, interestingly given, to which is attached a short but touching discourse.



A HOMILY

ON

The Unknown God.

“For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, To THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.”—Acts xvii. 23.

IN this paragraph, we have a graphic though brief description of the character of the men of Athens. “For all the Athenians and strangers which were there, spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing.” Athens was a city illustrious for its learning; on her streets some of the profoundest thinkers of the race had been discussing questions the most momentous to man. The spirit of debate had become incarnate in the inhabitants. But during the last century or two, serious and perceptible decay had taken place in the thought of the city; instead of investigating the true, the people were raving after the new. “They spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some *new* thing.” And when the love of the new gains ascendancy over the love of the true, degeneration is inevitable. The distinction between true and false philosophy, in every age,

consists mainly in this: the one loves the new more than the true, the other loves the true rather than the new.

But the religious aspect of the city is depicted in more lamentable colours still—"the city was wholly given to idolatry" (on the margin, "full of idols"). Idolatry was always flourishing in this city; but it seemed now as though it had received a new impulse. Why? Because their faith in idols was stronger? No; but because it was weaker. The faith of the Greek at this period, not only in idols, but in truth itself, was on the point of extinction. He had groped in darkness after God and Truth so long, without any success whatever, that the suspicion dawned upon him that the reason he had not discovered them was—*because they were not in being*. Perhaps God and Truth are not realities! What if they are only the creation of my own over-heated imagination! The suspicion was so humiliating, so blasting in its effects, so awfully barren and withering, that he strenuously attempted to conceal it from himself; he tried to forget his religious bankruptcy in spiritual intoxication. And because he believed strongly in nothing, he pretended, he feigned, to believe in everything,—scepticism drove him to credulity. "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that, in all things, ye are too superstitious." But, as already stated, at the core of his being, as the prolific source of his uneasiness and disquiet, was the consciousness that he knew not the living God; in his inmost heart the Holiest of All was unoccupied; in his breast was an altar with the melancholy inscription: "To the unknown God;" an altar always empty and deserted! So vivid was his consciousness of this aching void, that he found relief in giving it a vent, in giving it an utterance in the material world; he built an altar, empty and desolate, and on it a transcript of his own experience—To the unknown God. It might have had reference to the God of Israel, whose name was supposed to be ineffable;

but, no doubt, it was the expression to the Athenian of the most terrible fact of his existence, of the existence of the entire human race. An empty altar, with the strange motto ! That motto awakes a distinct echo in the heart of every unregenerate man ; there also is an altar with the inscription *TO THE UNKNOWN GOD !*

At this time, Paul went to Athens, and the everlasting Gospel with him ; and in it there is a perfect combination of the True and the New. Glad Tidings, True News, is its distinctive appellation. The proclamation of it by Paul created intense sensation among the populace ; and “ certain philosophers of the Epicureans and the Stoics, encountered him,” and in the discussion that followed, some lost their temper as they lost their point, and said derisively, “ What will this babbler say ? ” They abused their opponent,—a foolish way that to settle a question ; others feel more in earnest, and desire to understand this “ new doctrine whereof he spake ; ” and they brought him to Areopagus (the hill of Mars or Ares), that he might have a fair opportunity to unfold his views at length, and that they might have a fair opportunity of judging them. Whether “ they laid hold of him ” violently as a trespasser of the laws, and brought him to Areopagus to convict him, or merely to give him fair play to divulge his doctrine in a select place to a choice congregation, we care not to inquire at present. In either case, we have preserved to us a concise and lucid sketch of this noble discourse delivered before the most critical and philosophic audience in the world ; and I respectfully solicit your attention to what appears to me to be the main columns thereof.

He declares unto them the unknown God—

I. In His relation to Nature.

II. In His relation to Man.

These two relations exhaust our knowledge of God ; we know him in none other. These were the topics held in

dispute by the philosophers, and to which the Athenians now listen with abated breath.

I. GOD IN RELATION TO NATURE.

(1.) *He is the Creator of Nature.* "God made the world and all things therein." On this point he directs his remarks more especially against the Epicureans—they denied creation. "God made the world." As we look around us we observe that nature is divisible into matter and laws, matter and truths. The Athenian mind had been often grappling with the mysterious problem touching the origin of all things; but notwithstanding all the energy and time expended to solve it, it continued to be shrouded in as much darkness as ever. History, indeed, seems to testify that the human mind, left to its own resources, could never grasp the idea of creation, properly so called. Ancient Paganism, and an infidelity, which in our age is fast becoming obsolete, entertain one of the following views: either that matter existed from eternity, as we now see it; or that, though matter existed not in its present form, yet its primordial or constituent elements were uncreated, self-existent, and eternal. This last view was strenuously maintained by the Epicureans; they denied creation, and looked upon the world as the effect of the fortuitous concourse of atoms, and these atoms they believed to be uncreated and eternal. Of a creation *out of nothing*, the ancient heathens had not the crudest idea. Indeed, mankind are indebted to the Bible entirely for it. Not only the *work* but the *idea* of creation is Divine. The deliberate judgment of men was embodied in the maxim—"Out of nothing, nothing can come." Paul confronts this Epicurean tenet with the revealed truth that out of nothing the universe did come. "God"—not accident—"made the world." He not only shaped matter, but produced it. He not only built the universe, as an architect erects a house, but he produced the

materials likewise. Matter is not eternal. God is its maker and builder. And it is a memorable saying of Andrew Fuller, that a child may learn more in the first verse of the Bible in five minutes than the recondite sages of antiquity ever acquired in their intense and protracted studies. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." How many gallons of water had He to create the ocean? How many tons of earth had He to form a globe? How many thousands of atoms had He to make a moon? Why, says Moses, He called them all from nonentity. "God made the world and all things therein." And the truth with which Paul encountered the Epicurean philosophers of old, in the market and on the hill, requires to be reiterated again and again. We have very urgent reasons why we should call attention to it these years. There is a theory afloat, vindicated by men of unquestionable repute and of almost unrivalled mental calibre—a theory that sets creation out of nothing among the impossibilities. It prevailed in days of yore, and possesses extraordinary vitality yet—that the universe is an emanation, or, in still plainer language, a birth out of God. According to this theory, everything is born. The sun is born, the moon is born, the earth is born. It is averred "We cannot conceive, either on the one hand, nothing becoming something, or on the other, something becoming nothing"—(Sir W. Hamilton.) The world, therefore, is a Divine evolution. No: says the Bible, it is not an evolution, but a creation. He created it out of Himself, say these able men. No: He created it out of nothing, says the Bible. We cannot conceive such an act, say they. Man's conceptions are not God's boundary lines, says the Bible. We cannot explain the process, say they. Then believe the fact, says the Bible. And what if creation out of nothing be, after all, the object-matter, not of reason but of

faith. "Through *faith* we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things that are seen were not made of things which do appear." "God made the world." It existed nowhere before, nor in God, nor in space; it existed in no shape before, nor in germ, nor in development. It is an act of pure creation. As already hinted, *laws* form another important division of nature. Not only God made the matter of the universe, but also its laws. Laws in nature are so many windows in the dark, opaque walls of the world, through which we can have a peep at God and Eternity. Through the laws of nature we can look out from this world into the other. But over these windows infidelity draws the blinds and shuts God out. As we read its books, we could almost infer, from seeing the blinds down everywhere, that He is "either pursuing, or is on a journey, or peradventure He sleepeth." Strange, passing strange, that men should strive to shut up every avenue against God! But the truth abides: "God made the world," its matter, and its laws. Men lavish praise on each other for discovering these laws, but are very loath to give glory to God for making them. But the discovery of a law, compared with its creation, sinks to insignificance. Galileo has been richly extolled for discovering that the earth moves round the sun; but there is not much originality in that after all: to move it at first was the difficulty—that was originality indeed. Doctor Harvey has been highly and deservedly praised for discovering the circulation of the blood in the veins; but there was not much originality in that after all: to circulate it at first was the difficulty—that was originality indeed. "God made the world"—its matter and its laws.

(To be continued.)

J. C. JONES.

London.

Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Psalms.

OUR PURPOSE.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this *TEHILIM*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough *homiletic* treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

OUR METHOD.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1.) The *HISTORY* of the passage. Lyric poet *Y*, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words, is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2.) *ANNOTATIONS* of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3.) The *ARGUMENT* of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4.) The *HOMILETICS* of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts, and indicate such sermonizing methods, as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

Subject: AN IMPRECATION THAT CANNOT BE JUSTIFIED.

“Give them according to their deeds,
And according to the wickedness of their endeavours :
Give them after the work of their hands;
Render to them their desert.
Because they regard not the works of the Lord,
Nor the operation of His hands,
He shall destroy them,
And not build them up.”—Ps. xxviii. 4, 5.

HISTORY.—See page 204.

ANNOTATIONS.—*Ver. 4.*—“Give them according to their deeds.” This is the second petition of the Psalmist. The first was that the Lord would not punish him with the wicked: this is, that He would not let the wicked go unpunished. His invocation is, let full justice be done to the wicked; show them no mercy.

Ver. 5.—“Because they regard not the works of the Lord.” This is the ground on which he places his prayer. God’s operations are glorious, manifold, and incessant. His works are creative, sustaining, controlling, and redemptive. These works are revelations of Himself to His intelligent universe; but the wicked disregard them; “they regard not the works of the Lord;” they do not study them so as to reach their meaning, and be lifted in adoration to their author. “He shall destroy

them, and not build them up." Some regard this expression as a prayer rather than a prediction; their rendering is, *May He destroy them!*

ARGUMENT.—See page 205.

HOMILETICS.—This passage is an imprecation of David, and imprecations abound in his writings. See Psalm v. 10; x. 15; xviii. 40-42; xxviii. 4; xxxi. 17; xxxv. 3-8; xl. 14; lv. 9; lviii. 6-10; lix. 12-15; lxviii. 2; lxix. 22-25; lxxix. 12; lxxxiii. 9-17; cix. 6-15; cxxxvii. 7-9. In these passages we have such utterances as the following: "Destroy thou them, O God," &c. "Break thou the arm of the wicked," &c. "Let them be as chaff before the wind," &c. "Let the angel of the Lord chase them." "Let death seize upon them," &c. "Let them go down quickly into hell," &c. "Break thou the teeth in their head," &c. "Consume them in wrath," &c. "Let them make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city," &c. "As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish," &c. "Let their table become a snare for them," &c. "Let their eyes become darkened, so that they see not," &c. "Make their loins continually to shake," &c. "Pour out thine indignation upon them," &c. "O my God, make them as the stubble before the wind," &c. "As fire burneth wood, as flame setteth a mountain on fire, so persecute them with a tempest," &c. "Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow; let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg, let them seek their bread also out of desolate places." "Let there be none to extend mercy to him or to his fatherless children," &c., &c.

If there is not a savage vindictiveness in these utterances, what does language mean? Such language used by any other man, and found in any other work than the Bible, would expose the author to the charge of ruthless revenge. But there are Biblical interpreters who say it does not mean this in David's case. Some say the language is *prophetic*, that it does not express his wish for what he would have, but his prophecy of what must come. This is trifling. The spirit of prophecy is surely not necessary to predict

that suffering must follow sin; that is patent to the dullest soul in the universe. Others say that David speaks in his *official character* as a magistrate, and that therefore his language is justifiable. Their argument of defence runs thus:—Whatever is right for a man to pursue, is right for him to pray for. It is right for a magistrate to pursue the punishment of criminals, and therefore it is right of him to pray for their punishment. We deny that it is right for a magistrate to make the punishment of criminals an object of pursuit; his grand object should be their reformation, not their destruction. Surely the cause of Biblical morality is injured, rather than served, by attempts to make that appear good which is really bad. David, on the whole, was confessedly a good man, a man possessing many distinguished attributes of excellence; but he was not a perfect man; the Bible registers crimes of his, the most atrocious and revolting. The Holy Book does not profess to give us more than one perfect character, and that is Christ; in Him we can find nothing wrong. Why should we endeavour to justify David's wicked words, more than his wicked deeds.

The text is, perhaps, one of the least objectionable of his imprecations; in it he seeks only the punishment that is just: "according to their deeds." And this punishment he desires on account of their conduct, not towards himself but towards God, "because they regard not the works of the Lord." That such a vindictive prayer as this is perfectly unjustifiable, is clear from the following considerations:—

I. It involves an IGNORANCE OF THE INEVITABLE IN GOD'S MORAL GOVERNMENT.—The man prays for what *must* be. "Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours." A man may as well pray that water shall flow toward the ocean, that winter shall succeed autumn, that day shall succeed night, as to pray for suffering to follow sin. Indeed even in this life retribution is often very exact,—men are punished according to their deeds. G. S. Bowes, in a little volume entitled "*Illustrative Gatherings*," gives some

remarkable examples. "The Egyptians killed the Hebrew male children, and God smote the first-born of Egypt. Sisera, who thought to destroy Israel with his iron chariots, was himself killed with an iron nail, struck through his temples. Adoni-bezek—Judges i. 5-7. Gideon slew forty elders of Succoth, and his sons were murdered by Abimelech. Abimelech slew seventy sons of Gideon before one stone, and his own head was broken by a piece of milstone thrown by a woman. Samson fell by 'the lust of the eye,' and before death the Philistines put out his eyes. Agag—1 Sam. xx. 33. Saul slew the Gibeonites, and seven of his sons were hung before the Lord—2 Sam. xxi. 1-9. Ahab, after coveting Naboth's vineyard—1 Kings xxi. 19, fulfilled 2 Kings ix. 24-26. Jeroboam, the same hand that was stretched forth against the altar was withered—1 Kings xiii. 1-6. Joab having killed Abner, Amasa, and Absalom, was put to death by Solomon. Daniel's accusers thrown into the lions' den meant for Daniel. Haman hung upon the gallows designed for Mordecai. Judas purchased the field, and then went and hanged himself. So in the history of later days. Bajazet was carried about by Tamerlane in an iron cage, as he intended to have carried Tamerlane. Mazentius built a bridge to entrap Constantine, and was overthrown himself on that very spot. Alexander VI. was poisoned by the wine he had prepared for another. Charles IX. made the streets of Paris to stream with Protestant blood, and soon after blood streamed from all parts of his body in a bloody sweat. Cardinal Beaton condemned George Wishart to death, and presently died a violent death himself. He was murdered in Lea, and his body was laid out in the same window from which he had looked upon Wishart's execution."

The law of habit, the law of causation, and the law of memory, all render it inevitable that sinners will receive according to their wickedness.

The unjustifiableness of such a prayer as this will appear from the fact that:—

II. It involves a SAD FORGETFULNESS OF HIS OWN MORAL CONDITION. For a man to pray to the Almighty, to give to sinners

according to their deeds, implies that he regards himself as not belonging to the class of sinners. The spirit of the Pharisee in the Temple is here. There is "not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not." The holiest man is conscious of his imperfections; and he who prays, therefore, for the punishment of sinners is, at the time, sadly forgetful of his own spiritual condition. To pray to God to deal with men according to their deeds is virtually to pray for the damnation of even the best of men. None of us can stand before justice :

"Therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this—
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation : we do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy."—*Shakespeare.*

No man was more deeply conscious of his own moral unworthiness and sinful condition than David, as Psalm li. powerfully testifies ; but when he ventures on such imprecations as the text, he seems to forget himself.

The unjustifiableness of such a prayer as this will appear from the fact that:—

III. It involves a STATE OF MIND DIRECTLY OPPOSED TO THE MORAL LAW OF GOD. Even in the Old Testament we are commanded to love our neighbour, and to exercise towards him forbearance, love, tenderness, and compassion; and in the New, where the law is drawn out more fully and expressively in Christ, the spirit of revenge is denounced as a crime, and love for enemies enjoined as one of the cardinal duties of mankind. Christ's example is the moral law of the human race ; and how antagonistic was His spirit and His teaching to all malice and vindictiveness. How uniformly and mightily did He illustrate and enforce compassion for sinners, and love for those who hate us. On the cross He prayed for His enemies, He gave Himself for His enemies. "It is unquestionable," says Calvin on these verses, "that if the flesh move us to seek revenge, the desire is wicked in the sight of God. He not only forbids us to imprecate evil upon our enemies, in

revenge for private injuries, but it cannot be otherwise than that all those desires which spring from hatred must be disordered. David's example, therefore, must not be alleged by those who are driven by their own intemperate passion to seek vengeance."

The unjustifiableness of such a prayer as this will appear from the fact that:—

IV. It involves a DISPOSITION ETERNALLY INCOMPATIBLE WITH PERSONAL HAPPINESS. The passion of anger is an element of misery: to hate is to suffer. "What a chain of evils," says one, "does that man prepare for himself who is a slave to anger! He is the murderer of his own soul; yea, to the letter he is so, for he lives in a continual torment. He is devoured by an inward fire, and his body partakes of his sufferings. Terror reigns around him; every one dreads lest the most innocent, the most trifling occurrence, may give him a pretext for quarrel, or rouse him with fury. A passionate man is alike odious to God and man, and is insupportable even to himself."



Homiletic Sketches on the Book of Job.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of great scholarly and critical worth; such as Drs. Barnes, Wemyss, Mason Goode, Noyes Lee, and Herman Hedwick Bernard: the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering: but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in an order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.

Subject: THE MADDENING FORCE OF SUFFERING.

"AFTER this opened Job his mouth, and cursed his day; and Job spake, and said—

Let the day perish wherein I was born,
And the night in which it was said, There is a man-child
conceived.

Let that day be darkness :

Let not God regard it from above,

Neither let the light shine upon it.

Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it :

Let a cloud dwell upon it :

Let the blackness of the day terrify it.

As for that night, let darkness seize upon it :

Let it not be joined unto the days of the year :

Let it not come into the number of the months.

Lo, let that night be solitary,

Let no joyful voice come therein.

Let them curse it that curse the day,

Who are ready to raise up their mourning.

Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark :

Let it look for light, but have none :

Neither let it see the dawning of the day,

Because it shut not up the doors of my mother's womb,

Nor hid sorrow from mine eyes.

Why died I not from the womb ?

Why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the
belly ?

Why did the knees prevent me ?

Or why the breasts, that I should suck ?

For now I should have lain still and been quiet.

I should have slept : then had I been at rest

With kings and counsellors of the earth,

Which built desolate places for themselves ;

Or with princes that had gold,

Who filled their houses with silver :

Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been ;

As infants which never saw light.

There the wicked cease from troubling ;

And the weary are at rest.

There the prisoners rest together :

They hear not the voice of the oppressor.

The small and the great are there ;

And the servant is free from his master.

Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery,

And life unto the bitter in soul ;

Which long for death, but it cometh not ;

And dig for it more than for hid treasures ;

Which rejoice exceedingly,

And are glad when they can find the grave ?

Why is light given to a man whose way is hid,
 And whom God hath hedged in?
 For my sighing cometh before I eat,
 And my roarings are poured out like the waters.
 For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me,
 And that which I was afraid of is come unto me.
 I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet,
 Yet trouble came."—Job iii. 1-26.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—This chapter commences the poetic debate of the book, which extends to the 6th verse of the 42nd chapter. Here Job begins. For "seven days and seven nights" he sat in mute anguish; meanwhile his sufferings abated not, but probably increased. The passions of soul which they generated grew and became irrepressible, and he speaks. The swelling waters break through the embankment, and rush forth with fury and foam.

Ver. 1.—"After this Job opened his mouth, and cursed his day." "Reviled his day" would perhaps be a better translation than cursed, "which appears," says Dr. Lee, "too strong, and what is never really intended by the word here used. Cursing is an imprecation made by a direct appeal to God for vengeance, which cannot be said to be done here." "*His day*"—his natal day.

Ver. 2, 3.—"And Job spake, and said, Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived." From this to the twelfth verse the patriarch employs language of terrible grandeur and wild extravagance in reviling his natal day. "There is nothing," says Gova, "that I know of, in ancient or modern poetry, equal to the entire burst, whether in the wildness and horror of the imprecations, or the terrible sublimity of its imagery." Jeremiah, one of the boldest of the Hebrew poets, has language strikingly similar, chap. xx. 14-16. Dr. Bernard's translation of the entire passage seems as faithful as it is beautiful, which is as follows:—

"And Job spake and said:
 Perish the day wherein I was born!
 Or the night in which one said: *
 'She bringeth forth a man-child!'
 May that day be darkness!
 God regard it not from above!
 Neither let light shine upon it!
 Pollute it darkness and the shadow of death!
 May there dwell on it a cloud!
 Black vapours of the day affright it!
 As for that night—deep darkness seize it!
 Let it not rejoice amid the days of the year!
 Let it not come into the number of the months!

* *i.e.*, of my mother.

Lo, that night may it be cheerless !
 May there come into it no sound of joy !
 May those that curse their day point at it !
 Those ready to arouse the crocodile !
 Darkened be the stars of its twilight !
 Let it wait for the full light, and then be done !
 Yea, let it not behold even the eyelids of the dawn !
 Because it shut not up the doors of the belly I lay in,
 So as to hide misery from mine eyes.
 Why should I not have died from the womb ?
 When I came forth from the belly, then I ought to have
 expired.
 Wherefore did knees meet me ?
 Or why breasts that I should suck ?”

Thus speaks his storm-tossed soul, as speaks the ocean in a hurricane, in wild grandeur and savage majesty. He has no language too strong, no figures too bold, to express his detestation of his natal day.

Ver. 13.—“*For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept: then had I been at rest.*” Job means by this, that had he died as an infant, instead of undergoing his present torture, he would have been sleeping quietly in the dust.

Ver. 14-19.—“*With kings and counsellors of the earth, which built desolate places for themselves,*” &c. He seems in this passage to speak with equal grandeur, but with a more subdued and reflective soul. Never was the physical condition of the dead more magnificently and impressively described. A condition of *rest*,—a condition common to men of all social grades,—the king and his subject, the prince and the pauper, the good and the bad, the oppressor and his victim.

Ver. 20, 21.—“*Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery: and life unto the bitter in soul,*” &c. “Why is light given to the miserable, and life to the bitter soul who waits for death, but it cometh not, and dig for it more than for hidden treasures ?”—Dr. Lee.

Ver. 22, 23.—“*Which rejoice exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the grave? Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?*” The question here asked is, Why should man, whose misery leads him to desire death, be kept in life ? A very natural question this. A modern expositor has answered the question thus:—
 (1.) Those sufferings may be the very means which are needful to develop the true state of the soul. Such was the case with Job.
 (2.) They may be the proper punishment of sin in the heart, of which the individual was not fully aware, but which may be distinctly seen by God. There may be pride, and the love of ease, and self-confidence, and ambition, and a desire of reputation. Such appear to have been some of the besetting sins of Job.
 (3.) They are needful to teach true submission, and to show whether a man is willing to resign himself to God.
 (4.) They may be the very things which are necessary to prepare the individual to die. At the same time that men often desire

death, and feel that it would be a great relief, it might be to them the greatest possible calamity. They may be wholly unprepared for it."

Ver. 24.—"For my sighing cometh before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like the waters." Dr. Noyes explains this thus:—"My sighing comes on when I begin to eat, and prevents me taking my daily nourishment." He compares his roarings to the waters: they were like the restless billows, numerous and tumultuous.

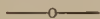
Ver. 25.—"For the thing which I greatly fear has come upon me." *Margin*, "I feared a fear and it has come upon me." Perhaps he had a deep presentiment, even in his prosperity, that some terrible catastrophe lay before him; or perhaps he refers to the apprehensions which the first trials awakened; for it is common in human nature to apprehend a second when a first calamity comes: when one child is taken away, the parent naturally fears lest a second should fall.

Ver. 26.—"I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet: yet trouble came." "If I rightly apprehend," says Dr. Lee, "the drift of the context here, Job means to have it understood that he is conscious of no instance in which he has relaxed from his religious obligations: of no season in which his fear and love of God have waxed weak: and, on this account, it was the more perplexing that such a complication of miseries had befallen him."

HOMILETICS.—This chapter is the language of man overwhelmed with suffering. There have been suffering men in all ages, and there are suffering men still, but we can scarcely conceive of a greater sufferer than Job. He suffered in his *circumstances*. The fortune which, perhaps, he had gained by years of industry, which he had long enjoyed, and with which he had done great good, was utterly destroyed as in a moment. He suffered in his *body*. He was smitten with "sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown." A virulent poison rankled in his blood, and covered his frame with burning eruptions. He suffered in his *heart*. His faithful servants, and his beloved sons and daughters, who were rooted in his affections, were ruthlessly snatched away, and his heart was bleeding at every pore. The partner of his bosom, too, instead of soothing him with kind words and loving attentions, taunted him with impious remarks. He was wounded in his *intellect*. His calamities broke in upon his religious belief, and confounded his judgment. He was involved in the most agonizing perplexity concerning the character and procedure of his Maker. The amount of his anguish we can scarcely exaggerate.

Now this chapter is the language of a man overwhelmed with suffering, and we must explain it accordingly. We must not apply to it the same canons of interpretation as we would to the language of a man in calmness, in health, in prosperity, in exultation. A man's language must be construed according to the mood of his soul. Here we have sufferings forcing a human soul—First: To the use of extravagant language. Secondly: To deplore the fact of existence. Thirdly: To hail the condition of the dead. Fourthly: To pry into the reasons of a miserable life.

(To be continued).



Sermonic Glances at the Gospel of St. John.

As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form, of Sermonic outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengskenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dorner; &c., &c.



Subject: CHRIST THE INCARNATE GOD.

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."—John i. 14.

HERE we have an account of the wonderful uniting of the human and the Divine in one person—Christ. Two things are here taught concerning Christ as the *incarnate* Deity,—the God-Man:—

I. He had a BEGINNING. "The Word was made flesh," or better, "became flesh." "Flesh" is used in very different senses in the Word of God. Sometimes it means all *animal nature*—"The end of all flesh has come before me." Some-

times *moral sensibility*—"I will take the heart of stone and give a heart of flesh," &c. Sometimes *spiritual depravity*—"They that are in the flesh cannot please God," &c. Sometimes *human nature*. Thus—"Thou hast given Him power over all flesh." The text means that the "Word"—the Divinity—assumed human nature, body and soul. Human nature, however, not in its fallen state, with any taint of corruption in it; but human nature fresh and pure from the hand of God. "He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." Observe then—

First: Christ was not the mere *apparition* of a man, as the ancient Docetæ would have, but a veritable man. He had flesh—"He was made in all points like as we are, yet without sin."

Secondly: Christ was not a *mere* man. He was a man, but His humanity was only a constituent part of His personality. His humanity was no more Himself than the body is man.

Thirdly: Christ is not *Divinity*. He is Divine, for the Word that became flesh, we are told, "was God." But Divinity was no more Christ than the soul is man as existing on earth.

What, then, is Christ? He is the *union* of man and Deity in one conscious personality. There was no actual Christ in the universe until the Incarnation, until the "Word became flesh." The term "flesh" is used rather than man, perhaps because it is impersonal. Christ took not some particular man or type of humanity, but human nature, and became one with the race, that all might have a share in Him.

II. HE LIVED AMONGST MEN. "Dwelt amongst us"—ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν. The word means tabernacled. He pitched His tent among men. Three things are here taught concerning this new life of His among men:—

First: This new life was a *manifestation of Divine glory to men*. "We beheld His glory." In the Hebrew tabernacle, Jehovah of old revealed Himself to His people in the mystic radiance of the Shekinah, but now in the tabernacle or tent

of Christ's humanity He reveals himself to the human race. The glory of God was seen in His majestic deportment, in His sublime doctrines, in His illustrious deeds, but especially was it seen in His transfiguration. "We were eye-witnesses of his majesty," says Peter. (2 Peter i. 16-17.) "We beheld"—ἐθεασάμεθα. The word seems to point to spectators in a theatre.

Secondly: This new life was the *only Divine production of the kind in the universe*. "The *only* begotten of the Father." This phrase is used by John in three other places. It is used by no other of the inspired writers. What does it mean? Some say,—especially beloved. This is unsatisfactory. Others, eternal generation. This is confusion. The only intelligible idea we can attach to it is this, that God "begot" or effected the union between Himself and humanity, and that there is no other such union in the universe. There is only one Christ throughout immensity. He is the "only begotten of—or rather from—the Father." He stands in the creation as the sublimely unique—the only "begotten."

Thirdly: This new life *abounded with grace and truth*. "Full of grace and truth." The word "grace" I take as standing for all that is genial, generous, and loving in temper: and the word "truth," as representing all that is substantial, real, and enduring, in thought, habit, and life. The former is opposed to all that is cold, selfish, and malign: the latter to all that is hollow, fictitious, and ephemeral. They are two sides or sections of the same thing: and that thing, moral goodness, the perfection of God; and the glory and happiness of His intelligent creation. Two remarks are suggested here concerning this "grace and truth"—(1.) They are deficient in man. Men, the world over, are selfish and false. (2.) They are abundant in Christ. He is full of grace. Full, notwithstanding men's immense provocation; full, notwithstanding the immense communications He has already made. He is full of truth too. He is the Eternal reality.*

* See *Homilist*, Third Series, Vol. iv., page 170.

THE following extract from Dr. Brown's admirable Commentary on this chapter shows how powerfully John, in his language, strikes against prevailing errors:—

"Within the limits of this Section, all the heresies that have ever been broached regarding the Person of Christ—and they are legion—find the materials of their refutation. Thus, to the Ebionites, and the Artemonites of the second century; to Noetus and Paul, of Samosata, of the third; and to Socinus and his followers, at and since the Reformation—who all affirmed that Christ was a mere man, more or less filled with the Divinity, but having no existence till He was born into our world—our Evangelist here cries: 'IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD.' To Arius, in the fourth century, and to a host of modern followers—who affirmed that Christ, though He existed before all other created beings, was Himself but a creature: the first and highest indeed, but still a creature—our Evangelist here cries: 'THE WORD WAS GOD.' 'All things were made by Him, and without Him was not one thing made that was made: in Him was life, and the life was the light of men; as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become children of God. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He declared Him.' To Sabellius, in the third century, and not a few speculative moderns—who held that there is but one Person in the Godhead: the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, being but three modes in which the one Person has been pleased to manifest Himself for man's salvation—our Evangelist cries: 'The Word was in the beginning WITH God: He is the only begotten from the Father, and He it is that declared Him.' To those, afterwards, called Docetæ—who, as early as the first century, held that Christ took only an apparent, not a real, humanity; and Appolinaris, in the fourth century, and some modern followers—who affirmed that Christ, though He took a human body, took no rational human spirit, the Word supplying its place as the only intelligence by which He acted; and the Nestorians, of the fifth century—who held, or were charged with holding, that that Holy Thing which was born of the Virgin was not the 'Son of God,' but only the son of Mary, to whom the Son of God joined Himself, making two separate persons, though closely united; and finally, to the Eutychians—who, in the same century, affirmed that the Divine and human natures were so blended, as to constitute together but one nature, having the properties of both—to one and all of these errorists (in language at least, though there is reason to think not always in actual belief), our Evangelist here cries, in words of majestic simplicity, and transparent clearness, 'THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH'—using that term 'flesh,' in its well-known sense when applied to human nature, and leaving no room for doubt in the unsophisticated reader, that He became Man in the only sense which those words naturally convey."

Germs of Thought.

THE VISIONS OF PAUL.

Subject: FIFTH VISION OF PAUL.

“For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am and whom I serve, saying Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.”—Acts xxvii. 23, 24.

THIS fact teaches that angels are interested in human affairs. At the same time, revelation does not give us much definite information concerning the personal constitution of these things; Infinite Wisdom has thrown a mysterious veil around this, and it is not in the power of man, at present, either to remove or to penetrate this veil. God has given us a measure of knowledge respecting the spiritual world which is necessary to meet our wants here, and to excite our hope for a fuller discovery in the world to come.

Observe:—

I. PAUL AS THE TEACHER OF PROVIDENCE. He stood up calmly and faithfully in the presence of those Pagan sailors and criminals, to teach that the world was governed by Providence, and not by fate. You are aware that God reveals His providence in two ways, by *words*, and by *facts*: these reciprocally confirm each other; and I am disposed to think that this wonderful voyage has been transmitted to us, in history, in order to throw light on the *natural* providence of God, in contradistinction to His *spiritual* providence.

The vision, and the facts connected with it, lead to three truths:—

1. *There is an absolute certainty that God will accomplish His designs.* I put that as an universal truth, although suggested by a particular incident. God appeared to Paul in the night

once at Jerusalem, and said :—"As thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, thou must bear witness of me in Rome." The purpose of God must be fulfilled. Need I say that God has His purposes, and schemes of operation? Look at the perfection of God's character; look at the material creation; look at the records of revelation; they will give in evidence that God acts according to a plan. Are you convinced, dear brethren, of this general truth, that God has His scheme, and that His scheme is universal? and being universal, it must be particular; if God governs *all* human beings, He governs *each*, and if each, He governs *all*.

2. *God sometimes employs unexpected and unlikely means to accomplish His designs.* Paul wished to go to Rome, but how? perhaps he had no definite plan, but God had. No sooner had the Apostle and his friends left Sidon, to sail unto Italy, than perils commenced—"Because the winds were contrary," the perils increased—"All hope that we should be saved was taken away." What about Rome, Paul? we see Crete, and Claudi, and Malta, but no Rome. These are the perils of life: contrary winds, sailing without winds and stars, hurricanes, shipwrecks, planks, human minds plotting against innocence. Sons and daughters of sorrow, have faith in God, trust in His wisdom and faithfulness.

3. *That genuine faith in the certainty of Divine providence stimulates and directs the free action of man.* There is one verse in this chapter, which is beautifully illustrative of this truth: "Paul said to the centurion, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." He believed that God had ordained a certain end, but not as detached from means adapted to secure that end. Every good practical man connects ends with means in his own history; he believes that God has a plan which is good, wise, and just, like God Himself; but instead of deriving, from that, motives to indolence and general moral inaction, he derives motives to stimulate, encourage, and sustain him. If God be God, he cannot be defeated. If man be man, he must be free. He cannot reconcile them, perhaps, which is a defect of the intellect, rather than of the moral nature.

II. PAUL AS THE SERVANT OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE. After looking upon the character of the Apostle as given here during the voyage, we are struck with—

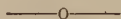
1. *His deep sense of Divine responsibility.* “For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve.” This is the foundation of Christian excellence in all, an intelligent feeling that we are God’s. I do not know a more sanctifying truth than the fact that we are God’s offspring, and depend upon Him physically, mentally, and morally; and if the feeling be consistent and strong, it cannot but render sin odious, and transgression hateful. Moreover, Paul was God’s by *Adoption*; he was bought with a price nothing less than the blood of Christ,—“Whose I am.” Although the Roman law regards me as its property, although my foes consider my life as sacrificed, there is a higher Emperor than Cæsar, a higher law than the Roman, and I am the subject of that Emperor Divine, and that law eternal and immutable.

2. *He maintained a high Christian character.* In his intercourse with the crew and passengers, there are two features of character worthy of imitation—(1.) *Kindness*, (2.) *Devotion*. These are beautiful, separately considered, but more so when combined; I doubt whether they can be separated; where there is genuine kindness there is piety, and where there is stirring piety there is kindness. Until Christ’s Church becomes in heart, in spirit, in universal character a kind Church, it can never make an impression on the world. Many Christians think because they are right in their Theology, and have certain Ecclesiastical relations, they are at liberty to act un-Christian, which is a great blunder in Ethics, and a glaring inconsistency in practical life. Disciple of Jesus, if you are not kind, give your religion to the wind. *Devotion.* Not only kind, but he was devout—“He took bread, and gave thanks to God in the presence of them all.” What a noble act! What a dignified attitude! A praying man is the most heroic in storms, and the most happy when all is calm.

3. *He exerted a beneficial influence.* Paul was the means of saving 276 lives, and was that a little thing? The soldiers counselled the murder of the prisoners at the hour of ship-

wreck, but the centurion said No; he had so studied the Apostle's mind and character during the voyage, that he would not consent to the wicked proposal, so that Paul was a kind of mediator, by Divine appointment, to save his fellow-prisoners.

CALEB MORRIS.



THE RELIGION OF MAN AND THE RELIGION OF GOD.

"Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"—Micah vi. 6, 7, 8.

WHATEVER darkness there is in man's views of the science of religion, it is not owing to a lack of clearness, or precision, in the Bible itself, which is its chief expounder. Here we are not bewildered by abstract and technical phraseology, but taught in forms of speech exactly suited to our faculties. Its statements are direct, obvious, unencumbered. These at once find an echo in every breast. Man has a conscience, reason, and the capability of impression; he can be moved by truth, and by the declarations of the Gospel. "Speak, Lord, for thy servant hears." "The Word of the Lord is perfect," and, "the Word of the Lord is quick," &c. The two things of this text which invite our consideration are—I. The religion of man; and, II. The religion of God.

I. THE RELIGION OF MAN. Man is here arraigned by the prophet in God's name, at the bar of the material world, to answer for his disloyalty and obstinacy. God in mercy, for a season, abdicates His right to convict. The most impartial witnesses are appealed to—"mountains, hills, and the strong foundations of the earth," are invited to sit in judgment on man's conduct. The evidences of Divine clemency and forbearance are enumerated. The people had been delivered from the land of bondage; provided with faithful leaders—

encompassed with songs of deliverance—and the curse of Balaam was turned to a blessing. The evidences are palpable, they cannot be gainsayed; the people stand confessed in their guilt, and not ironically, but earnestly, cry out, “Wherewith shall I come before the Lord?” &c.

1. *This is simply the voice of man’s religious instinct, seeking after God.* In Pope’s universal prayer, there is truth, as well as error. “There are,” says the late Dr. Vaughan, “tendencies in man which make religion, in some form, a necessity of his nature; but it is no less certain that there are tendencies in him, which ensure that the religion chosen by him will not be a spiritual one,” &c.

2. *Consciousness, history, the Bible, prove that this inward light has become darkness.* Man’s religious faculty has become impaired, and reveals its degeneracy in superstition and cruelty. God must be propitiated, but by “thousands of rams, and ten thousands of rivers of oil,” and by the sacrifice of their own offspring. “The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul.” “The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.” “Where there is no vision,” &c.

3. *The ignorance in which man has involved himself is rectified by God’s revealed will.* “He hath shewed thee, O man,” &c. Reason has failed to discover a resting-place for the soul. The course of ages witnessed the trial, and in the most favourable circumstances. The failure has been complete, the discomfiture most humiliating. “The world, by wisdom, knew not God.” “Where shall wisdom be found?” “Who will shew us any good?” “It is not in me.” “He hath shewed thee, O man,” &c. “Come unto me, all ye that labour.” “Enter into thy rest, O my soul.”

II. GOD’S RELIGION.—“He hath shewed thee, O man.” The guilt of the people is implied in these words; their ignorance was gross, and allied with superstition, most barbarous and cruel; and it was culpable ignorance.

Notwithstanding their gorgeous economy of symbol and sacrifice, they were taught that the symbol could not save, that God “desired truth in the inward parts.” This old dis-

pensation is revived in our times, and sacraments are elevated into Saviours; and those who were made free are putting their necks again under the yoke of bondage, and returning to "the beggarly elements." The symbol cannot save; the baptism of water, whether with much or little, cannot regenerate. The "holy communion" (?) cannot make holy; the priest cannot save; the Church is not the ark; the Ritual cannot give rest to the soul. Human merit merits nothing but reprobation. Christ alone can save, and His position everywhere must be "in the midst." Now, this religion of God, or the more excellent way, is summed up by the prophet under three heads:—

1. "*Do justly.*"—They labour; to get life *for the labour* has ceased. The experiment has failed, and the idea is now abhorred. Now follow the outward evidences of "truth in the inward parts"—just towards God, and strict integrity in all our relations to, and transactions with man. Love to God ensures love and justice to man. The religion of God is the foe and destroyer of all injustice, of all oppression and wickedness.

2. "*Love mercy.*"—This strikes at the selfishness of our nature. As an attribute in the Divine character, it were an easy thing to love mercy; and this has been often used as an opiate to calm a guilty conscience, and to encourage presumption. It is not so easy to love the mercy of God, as allied with His righteousness. "I will sing of mercy and righteousness." To love mercy in God, and to be merciful to man, imply a change of heart—our connexion with the family of God—who maketh his sun to rise on the evil, &c. "Be ye therefore merciful," &c. The hard, exacting, unmerciful man, is outside the family of God.

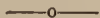
3. "*Walk humbly with thy God.*"—The soul of religion is here; reconciliation—communion—reverent, constant converse, with God.

Practical questions: Why is it that so many are in the dark about religion? so many laying other foundations? "Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge?" Yes; God hath shewed thee, &c. His voice is clear, as of a trumpet,

and marked as the radiance of the sun upon the ocean. "The day-spring from on high," &c. "This is the way, walk in it." "Hear, and your soul shall live." "Men loved darkness rather than light."

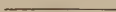
JOHN LEWIS.

Tenby.



The Pith of Renowned Sermons.

The sermons of some of the greatest preachers of England are lost to modern men through their verbosities; it is the intention, under this section, to give from time to time their pith and spirit.



No. XVII.—ROBERT HALL, A.M.

Subject: DISCOURAGEMENTS AND SUPPORTS OF THE
CHRISTIAN MINISTER.

"Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not."—2. Cor. iv. 1.

I. THE SOURCES OF DISCOURAGEMENT CONNECTED WITH THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTRY.

First: They are such as arise, in part, *from the nature of the office itself*. The minds of men are naturally indisposed to the reception of Divine truth. (α.) The Gospel presupposes a *charge of guilt*. You will find it, however, no easy matter to fasten the charge on the conscience. (β.) The very attempt to produce that humiliating *sense of unworthiness and weakness*, which is essential to a due reception of the Gospel, will frequently excite disgust, should it terminate in no worse consequences. By a part of your hearers you will possibly be regarded as an unnatural character, and as having in your religion a tincture of what is savage and inhuman; in consequence of which, they who refuse to profit by your admonitions will be apt to apply to you the language of the King of Israel, "I hate him, for he always prophesieth evil of me, and not good." (γ.) There are many, who, after appearing for the time earnestly engaged in the pursuit of Salvation, have, in

consequence of stifling convictions, become more callous and insensible than ever, as iron is hardened in the fire. They are equally in danger of catching at premature consolation, and of sinking into listless despondency.

Secondly: *The difficulties which are modified by a variety of circumstances, and which result from that diversity of temper, character, and situation, which prevails in our auditory.* To the several classes of which it consists, it is necessary rightly to divide the Word of Truth, and give to every one his portion of meat in due season. The epidemic malady of our nature assumes so many shapes, and appears under such a variety of symptoms, that these may be considered as so many distinct diseases, which demand a proportionate variety in the method of treatment; nor will the same prescription suit all cases.

Thirdly: *The more private functions of the ministry.* To affirm it to be the duty of a pastor to visit his people often is, perhaps, affirming too much. The more frequently he converses with them, however, provided his conversation be properly conducted, the more will his person be endeared, and his ministry acceptable.

II. THE SUPPORTS BY WHICH THESE SOURCES OF DISCOURAGEMENT ARE BALANCED.

First: *The office is of Divine institution.* The unhappy disputes which have prevailed in the Church respecting the proper channels for conveying, and the legitimate mode of vesting it, are so far from weakening the evidence of this truth, that they may be considered as so many concurrent suffrages in its favour; since it is allowed, on all hands, that the Christian ministry is an ordinance of God.

Secondly: *The materials of our work are ready furnished to our hand, and at the same time of a nature admirably adapted to our purpose.* Our office is that of stewards of the mysteries of the kingdom; our duty faithfully to dispense the stores which superior wisdom and opulence have provided. Like the works of nature, while the doctrine exhibits at first view an impress of its Author, in the unequivocal character it bears of purity and majesty, it improves on a closer examination; and

the more deeply it is investigated, the more the wisdom of the contrivance, in its exquisite adaptation to the state and condition of mankind, becomes conspicuous. Draw your instructions immediately from the Bible; the more immediately they are derived from that source, and the less they are tinged with human distinctions and refinements, the more salutary and the more efficacious.

Thirdly: *It is the dispensation of the Spirit.* To this the Apostle immediately refers in the context, where he is contrasting the Christian with the Jewish institute.

Fourthly: *The dignity and importance of the profession.* (a.) That office cannot be mean which the Son of God condescended to sustain; for the Word which we preach first began to be spoken by the the Lord; and while he sojourned upon earth, that Prince of Life was chiefly employed in publishing His own religion. (β.) That office cannot be mean, whose end is the recovery of man to his original purity and happiness—the illumination of the understanding—the communication of truth—and the production of principles which will bring forth fruit unto everlasting life.

Fifthly: *The reward that awaits the faithful minister.* His joy will be the joy of his Lord, inferior in degree, but of the same nature, and arising from the same sources, while he will have the peculiar happiness of reflecting that he has contributed to it; contributed, as an humble instrument, to that glory and felicity of which he will be conscious he is utterly unworthy to partake. Though the scene of our labour is on earth, the things to which it relates subsist in eternity.

Bristol.

URIJAH R. THOMAS.



THE WORK AND CHARACTER OF MINISTERS DESCRIBED.—EZRA.—Ezra vii. 6-10. Nehemiah—viii. Levi.—Mal. ii. 5-7; Deut. xxxiii. 8-11. Isaiah—vi.; xl. 1-8; lii. 7-11; lviii. 1; lxi. 1-3. Jeremiah—i.; ix. 1; xv. 15-21; xx. 7-13. Ezekiel—i. to xxiv. John the Baptist.—Luke i. 13-17; 76; 76-80; Matt. iii. 1-15; John v. 35. Paul.—Acts ix. 15-16; xvi. 17; xx. 17-38; xxvi. 18; Rom. i. 1-6; vi.; x.; xi.; xii.; xiii.; Eph. iii. 8; 1 Thess. ii.; 1 Tim. i. 12-16. Barnabas.—Acts xi. 22-24. Stephen.—Acts vi. 5. Epaphroditus—Phil. ii. 25-30. Timothy—Phil. ii. 19-23; 1 Cor.—iv. 17; xvi. 10-11. Jesus—Matt. i. 21; Luke i. 31-35; iv. 16-22; Mark i. 14-15; xii. 37; John vii. 46; Acts x. 36-38.

Variations on Themes from Scripture.

No. XXIX.

Subject: LONESOME ACHIEVEMENT.

ISAIAH lxiii. 3-5.

HE that came to the prophet's vision, from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah—glorious in apparel, and travelling in the greatness of His strength—speaking in righteousness, mighty to save; He questioned touching the hue of his apparel, red as of one that treadeth in the winefat, answered that He *had* been treading the wine-press, and that in doing so He was alone—of the people there being none with Him, no, not one. He looked and there was none to help; and He wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore His own arm brought and wrought out salvation.

Lonesome achievement and lonesome endurance: who ever wrought, or suffered like this Man? "Alone I did it" is often with heroes an arrogant arrogation; still oftener with pseudo-heroes an empty vaunt. Now and then in the world's history, some solitary toiler, successful in his unshared labour, may claim the right to say, with Shakespeare's haughty Roman, "Alone I did it!" But the claimants are out of all proportion with the work done—every man his own trumpeter, and clamorous in his clarion cries. "My power, and the might of mine hand, hath gotten me this wealth." But even the sayer of this (Deut. viii. 17) is only supposed to say it in his heart, not out aloud, with flourish of bugle blast. Less reticent is the stout heart of the King of Assyria, for he saith (Isaiah x. 13), "By the strength of my hand I have done, and by my wisdom." Alone I did it!

In the instance of Caius Marcius there are vouchers; and the self-assertion is not spontaneous, arrogant though he be, but wrung from him by the taunts of eager enmity. "The Senate," says Volumnia, "has letters from the General, wherein he gives my son the whole name of the war: he had in

this action outdone his former deeds doubly." Alone he did it:

"—Alone he enter'd
The mortal gates o' the city . . . aidless came off,
And with a sudden re-enforcement struck
Corioli like a planet: now all's his."

So with Corneille's Spanish hero—

"L'étendard de Castille . . .
Des mains des ennemis par moi seul fut sauvé:
Cette seule action rétablit la bataille."

To the same tribe of rather tall talkers belongs too his Horace, proclaiming "Enfin voici le bras Qui seul fait aujourd'hui le sort de deux Etats." Made arrogant by glory, ever since the battle of Plataea, Pausanias engraved on the golden tripod, dedicated by the confederates to the Delphic god, an inscription, claiming exclusively to himself, as general of the Grecian army, the conquest of the barbarians—an egotism, says one historian of Athens, no less at variance with the sober pride of Sparta than it was offensive to the natural vanity of the allies.* On the other hand, accepted as true by modern critics is the remark of Herodotus, that however ill it might be taken by others, he was constrained to declare that Greece was indebted for its freedom to Athens; Athens, with Themistocles for its leader, gave life to the courage of the other States, while always relying on its own strength. I alone, is Cicero's style, have twice saved the Republic: *Unus bis Rempublicam servavi*. If Luther inclined, in his free table-talk, to claim the merit of having saved Christendom from Anti-Christ, it was with the reserve of a "yet not I" in favour of Divine agency: "I only read in the Bible at Erfurt, in the monastery; .. at Wettenburg, under God, I gave the devil, the Pope of Rome, such a blow as no emperor, king, or potentate could have given him; yet it was not I, but God by me." To apply the conditional clause in Sophocles—

'Η γὰρ δίκη νιν ἔειλε, κ' οὐκ ἐγὼ μόνος.

* "The inscription was afterwards erased by the Spartan Government, and another, citing only the names of the confederate cities, and silent as to that of Pausanias, was substituted in its place."

When Metellus left Spain before Pompey, the latter availed himself of this opportunity to make a claim of having himself alone accomplished the pacification of the Peninsula.

Gibbon says of Stilicho, in the last decade of the fourth century, that the various multitudes of Europe and Asia were overawed by the authority of this one man. *Solus erat Stilicho*, &c., is the exclusive commendation of Claudian, ignoring the Emperor (Honorius). At that fearful crisis in the progress of Attila when, as Milman describes it, the insatiable and victorious Hun seemed suddenly and unaccountably to pause in his career of triumph,—it was because he stood rebuked and subdued before a peaceful embassy, of which the Bishop of Rome (Leo the Great), as he held the most conspicuous station, so he received almost all the honour. “The names of the rich Consular Avienus, of the Prefect of Italy, Trigetius, who ventured with Leo to confront the barbarian conqueror, were speedily forgotten, and Leo stands forth the sole preserver of Italy.”* Like Corneille’s *Sévère*, *Lui seul rétablit l’ordre, et gagne la victoire*.

* It has been pronounced the least pleasant part of Dr. Andrew Reed’s character, call it egotism, or call it self-assertion, that he could never afford a share of his philosophic successes, and seldom much of the direction of the work that led to them, to lieutenants and associates. Even his sons allow what a reviewer of their life of their father calls a “certain flavour of dictatorial self-will about him;” and the reviewer is safe in inferring that those who laboured with the laborious Doctor, and whose contributions were indisputable to his success, cannot but be more than a little disappointed at the position assigned them in the narrative of his life. “About all his works there is an unpleasant undertone of ‘I by myself, I.’ There is due recognition, of course, of ‘the Divine blessing’ on occasion, but the personal pronoun is the central figure everywhere.”

Bruce, the traveller, is taxed with totally omitting throughout the narrative of his journey to mention Balugani, the young Italian artist who had joined him at Algiers, and had been the constant companion of all his journeys as far as Condar and the sources of the Nile, had kept his journals, assisted him in drawing, and had been evidently of material use to him. “Bruce’s great ambition was to be considered the first and only European who ever visited the sources of the Nile,”—and he accordingly throws discredit upon, or else leaves unnoticed, previous records of prior travellers.

Principal Baillie cannot conceal his disgust at the impudence of the

Jerome vaunts, in such terms as these, his prowess against the heretics, and the outcome of it: "The rescripts of the Emperors, which order the expulsion of the Origenists from Alexandria and Egypt, were issued at my suggestion: that the Roman bishop detests them with so intense an aversion is the effect of my advice: that the whole world has recently been in a blaze of hatred against Origen, who was once read with perfect composure, is the work of my pen."

Ipsè dixi, ipse feci.

There was a time in the career of Abelard when, the cynosure of studious eyes, his name a power in every city in Europe, he "reigned and reigned alone." *Cum jam me solum in mundo superesse philosophum æstimarem, &c.*, he writes in his Epistles.

Independents in declaring, of Marston Moor, that "they and their Major-General Cromwell had done it all their alone" (or *Scotice*, their lane,) to the disparagement of godly officers of his own covenanting colour, (Merivale's *Histor. Studies*); and envious Hollis too is cited, who says that Cromwell "had the boldness to assume much of the victory himself, or rather, Herod-like, to suffer others to magnify and adore him for it."

Of Newcastle's prowess on the same field, his "fond and fantastic" duchess, dear to Charles Lamb, gives such an account as to make it plain that his lordship would have won the battle, in his wife's opinion, with his own hand, had it not been for the obstinacy of one unlucky Roundhead. We are not offended, as Mr. Nassau Senior observes, when the Trojan army flies before the onset of Achilles; but, to a considerable extent, this is merely a poetical representation of actual facts: we know how much the efficiency of troops depends on the example and the impulse which they receive from their immediate leader. "Though Rupert had little skill, his charge almost always scattered our Parliamentarians." Napoleon maintained, we are further reminded, that if Murat had fought at Waterloo, the British squares would have been broken. The victory of Marengo, again, is always mentioned as the work of Dessaix; the thousands who accompanied him go for nothing.

Talking of Waterloo, that is an edifying anecdote of Moore's about the Abbé de Pradt, who begins one of his books "*Un seul homme a sauvé l'Europe; c'est moi.*" The Abbé read this in a company where the Duke of Wellington was present, Waterloo then quite recently an accomplished fact; and on the reader making a pause at the word "*l'Europe*," all eyes were turned towards the Duke; but then came out, to their no small astonishment, "*c'est moi.*"

Wallace is Tytler's hero in the paragraph which runs, "Thus, by the effort of a single man, not only unassisted, but actually thwarted and opposed by the nobility of the country, was the iron power of Edward completely broken, and Scotland once more able to lift her head among free nations." Describing a later stage of the struggle, the same historian says that in the conduct of the war, and its decisive success, Bruce "stood alone," and shared the glory with no one.

Around one man has been said to have gathered all the glory of that signal revolution, the Sicilian Vespers: John of Procida has been handed down as almost the sole author of the expulsion of the French, and the translation of the crown of Sicily to the house of Arragon: "Peter of Arragon, the

It would be easy to crowd a long paragraph with heterogeneous illustrations from miscellaneous literature, bearing on divers aspects of lonesome achievement, or the claim thereto, spurious or well-grounded: including in its wide range, for instance, a Bosola repudiating all aid,—"Oh, by no means; let me have no train when on such an errand;" a Firmilian's crazy jubilation, "It was my doing—mine alone;"—an Olivia Arundel killing the passion which had become stronger than herself: "Alone she did it; unaided by any human sympathy or compassion, unsupported by any human counsel;"—or again, the Dean in *Reuben Medlicott*, claiming to have been further up the Nile than any man living, and to have seen more of Palestine than any man living, and to have "been on the top of Mount Sinai, which nobody in Europe has to say but myself;" or Adam Bede, whistling low every now and then over the achievement of his deft and strong right hand, unaided from without, and turning his head on one side with just a perceptible smile of gratification—of pride, too, for if Adam loved a bit of good work, he loved also to think "I did it,"—above all, when alone he did it.

Or, turning from to-day's prose fiction to the great epics of Milton and Tasso, one thinks of the fallen archangel exploring his solitary flight, with the after-boast—

"I therefore, I alone, first undertook
To wing the desolate abyss, and spy
This new created world."

And of Rinaldo when "alone against the Pagans he would fight, and kill their kings from Egypt unto Jude," and when again—

"A wondrous thing, one knight whole arméd bands,
Alone, and hanging in the air, withstands."

Or, once more, of Sophronia's protest in an earlier canto—

"The thirst of glory can no partner bide,
With mine own self I did alone conspire."

Emperor Palæologus, Nicholas III., the revolted barons of Sicily, were but instruments aided by his strong will, brought into close alliance through negotiations conducted by him alone."

When did two accounts of the same battle ever resemble each other? Ask Mr. Motley, in reference to the battle of Nieuport, and to the claims of Sir Francis Vere, of whose character modesty was not the one absorbing quality; for, according to the whole tenor of Vere's narrative, he, Sir Francis, was "himself not only a great part, but the whole of the events he describes"—the victory of Nieuport being entirely due to his arrangements, and to his personal valour, and that of his English followers—to the ignoring of Prince Maurice and the rest. He might, or could, or at any rate would, have said with Wallenstein—

"—once already have I

Proved myself worth an army to you—I alone—"

if not, with him, going on to say, "'Twas I must rise, and with creative word Assemble forces in the desolate camps. I did it." And it was the Duke of Friedland's great right to say so. There are seldom, if ever, wanting in the world's history those who have some such right.

Ἄλλ' ἀντοχειρί μοι μόνη τε δραστήον
Τούργον τόδε.

—o—

AN EXAMPLE TO MEN OF MODERN GOVERNMENTS.—In the reign of Charles I., Sir Harry Vane had the good fortune to obtain from that monarch the appointment of treasurer to the navy. The fees attached to the office were an allowance of fourpence in the pound on the money expended for the purposes of the navy. In consequence of the war with Holland the income of the treasurer amounted to £30,000 a year. Of this enormous revenue—which was equal to five times that sum in the present day—Sir Harry was not willing to avail himself, but with great disinterestedness brought the matter before the House of Commons, and voluntarily offered to relinquish the fees during his life upon the simple stipulation that the Government should allow the sum of £200 a year to a person whom he had qualified for the discharge of the duties of the office. The House of Commons accepted the proposal, and, in addition to the grant of £200 a year for the services that were required, the members of the House insisted upon conferring an annuity upon Sir Harry of £1200 a year during his life. Thus, by his generous conduct, an enormous sum was saved to the nation.—*Dr. Jeffers.*

The Preacher's Dissecting Room ;

CONTAINING

PEN PORTRAITS OF REPRESENTATIVE PREACHERS.

"WITHOUT A PARABLE SPAKE HE NOT UNTO THEM."

Complaints against the modern pulpits are rife alike in social circles and literary productions. Whilst many of them are characterized by flippant ignorance and sceptical rancour, others are marked both by good judgment and holy feeling. The purpose of these Sketches is the improvement of the pulpit. Nothing would the writer deprecate more than to wound the heart or get the finger of ridicule pointed at any honest-hearted preacher of Christ; hence he has clad his characters and circumstances with a fictitious vesture—like the Great Teacher, he has spoken in parables. We shall examine representative preachers of the four great prevailing schools—the SENSATIONAL, including (1.) the tragic; (2.) the comic; (3.) the rhapsodic. The INTELLECTUAL, including (1.) the technical; (2.) the grand; (3.) the philosophic. The SPIRITUAL, including (1.) the mystical; (2.) the intuitional; and the NONDESCRIPT, including a great variety.

No. V.

THE GRAND PREACHER.

THE love of display, or the desire to be grand, is an instinct common to a large number of the human race.

Here, in our country, and in this age, it has grown into a passion most prevalent and potent. It shows itself in our costume: in order to be grand, our women garb themselves in apparel whose hues and shapes are intended to arrest the wondering look, and admiring gaze. With the luxuriant tresses of peasants and savages, and even the scalps of the dead, they decorate heads teeming with notions of vanity and folly. Few facts are more disgraceful to our modern civilization than the fact,—that a large trade is being carried on in this country in the hair of paupers and corpses, in order to minister to the vanity of the women amongst us who would be grand.

It is seen in our literature. Most of the popular literature of the day is very grand: it is set in the highest key-note, tinged with glaring hues, and spangled like the robes of the actor on the brilliantly lighted stage. Our popular Journalists all labour to be grand: one of our most popular Dailies is notorious for its swelling sounds and dazzling embroidery.

It is said that vanity is the infirmity of feeble minds. We are inclined to accept this statement: for we can scarcely believe that souls of true moral sentiment, philosophic insight, and healthy reflective faculty, could ever be vain. Truly great souls are characteristically modest; they shrink from parade, and sicken at pageantry. Who has ever seen a truly great man bedizened in jewellery, or a woman of the higher order

of mind flaunting the fashions of the hour? "Vanity is the fruit of ignorance. It thrives most in subterranean places, never reached by the air of heaven and the light of the sun."

It is sad to find this desire for self parade, this passion to be grand, actuating those who are not only the professed disciples, but the publicly recognised representatives of "Him who is meek and lowly in heart."

The pulpit has its grand preachers, men whose desire for display is a passion. The extraordinary subjects which they select for discourse, their plan of treatment, their high-flown language, their rhetoric cadences and colours, all show that the same passion burns in them as animates the empty girl, decorated as the doll of fashion. What is accepted by some as "a call to the Ministry," is often found, when traced back to its source, and correctly analysed, to be nothing more than a desire for self-manifestation. Whilst grand preachers are found in all religious denominations, and differ from each other in some minute particulars, they agree in many points. They are generally *plagiarists*. The man who plies his own faculties in developing and shaping the resources of his own mind belongs to a mental type in which vanity, as a strongly operative power, is seldom found. The grand preacher adorns himself with the productions of other minds. Like the vain woman, he makes his head appear large and imposing, with tresses that grew on more obscure, though worthier brows. He does not do the miner's work, he does not find the ore; nor the smelter's work, he does not purify it; nor always the smith's work, he does not fashion it into useful or ornamental forms. He is simply the polisher and retailer, he burnishes it, and exhibits it in all its glare in his window. What gives turpitude to him as a plagiarist is this, that all he displays he would have regarded as his own productions. He would have you believe that he did all,—was miner, smelter, smith, as well as the retailer.

"He steals a thought,
And clips it round the edge
And challenges him whose 'twas
To swear to it."

They are generally *hard workers*. No preacher's work is so hard as theirs. As a rule, they pursue the following method:—On the Monday they are busy in quest of some striking passage of Scripture as a text for the coming Sunday: when they have settled this they proceed to a method of treatment; the discovery of this method costs them no little amount of anxiety and effort, for it must be something out of the ordinary course of sermonic plan. Then they proceed to examine commentaries

and sermons for materials to fill up the outline, not forgetting to look out the grandest paragraphs and the most striking illustrations. On Wednesday, perhaps, they begin to write their sermon, to work the whole into a form, selecting the most attractive words, polishing sentences and studying rhetorical effect. This work of writing will take at least the day. On Thursday, if they have to preach twice, they pursue the same method. On Saturday, if they are memoriter preachers, their work is tremendous: they have to take the whole from the M.S. into their memory, and keep it there like a nightmare over the Saturday night. Then on the Sunday, pale, haggard, and wan, they take it from the memory and present it to their congregations with the most studied effect. The whole process is most unnatural: the way of such a preacher is not a "way of pleasantness," nor is his path a "path of peace." Selecting, combining, decorating, writing, committing to memory, repeating with verbal accuracy, with studied tones and attitudes; this is his labour. Poor man! he is amongst the "weary and heavy laden."

The preaching of such men reminds us of a builder everlastingly at work in erecting new houses with exactly the same materials. The house which he has built one week he pulls down the next; and with exactly the same materials builds up another differing only in shape and style. And thus on through the whole of his life. He has built many houses, but he has not enriched the world, he is always working with the same materials, bringing them into new forms, and painting them with new colours. The grand preacher who reads his sermon does not, of course, work quite so hard as the memorizer, and he has more opportunity of appearing, what he desires to appear, in the pulpit very fine. In his M.S. he has taken care to indicate in what sentences he should rise to thunder, and in what he should sink into a tremulous whisper; where he should raise his hand and where he should fold his arms, where he should turn his eyes to heaven, and where he should fasten them on the pews, where he should look sad and awful and where he should look bright and jubilant. An enlightened Nonconformist preacher told us some time ago that the best time for witnessing the exhibitions of the grand preacher is, in London, in the month of May, on some missionary occasion. The directors of Dissenting missionary societies, he said, selected for these occasions the preacher who could be the most tremendous, and gave him twelve months for his preparations. Hence every year, at Rowland Hill's old Chapel, as well as in other places, one appeared in the pulpit professedly to do the grand; and the grand he generally did to the utmost of his power; the grand

in composition, the grand in illustrations, the grand in attitude and voice. The theatricalism, he said, to him was most painful, inasmuch as it was so utterly incongruous with the whole genius of Christianity and the ostensible solemnity of the occasion.

They are generally *great advertisers*. They take care to make known all they consider the praiseworthy doings of their conventicle or their church. No good collection for any good object must be forgotten or confined to the knowledge of the congregation. It must be trumpeted on the platform, it must be published in reports, it must be emblazoned in those little religious journals which live by puffing popular preachers. The good they do in secret they take care to publish on the "house-top:" the charity which the "right hand" does the "left hand" shall not only know, but struggle to make known. In passing, we cannot forbear uttering our protest against the growing habit of parading the benevolences of Christian Churches. The Church that does it demonstrates in the act that it is destitute of that "charity which vaunteth not itself, neither is puffed up;" and the Paper that condescends to report such doings degrades the true mission of journalism, by ministering to that vanity which is the devil of sects.

We have said that grand preachers differ in some respects from each other. We have in our minds four individuals of the class, each belonging to a different Church, and possessed of different degrees of mind and culture. ALPHA is a grand preacher. In person he is a man of middle stature, rather attenuated in form, and cadaverous in aspect. He has passed the sunny side of fifty, and the almond tree has blossomed on his brow; his head is not large, but his looks are thoughtful, and his grey eyes, which have a romantic squint, impress thoughtless spectators that they are in the presence of a man of genius. This impression he seeks to deepen and spread by his poetic references, his wailing intonations, and his somewhat fantastic attitudes. He has succeeded in getting a goodly number of the feebler amongst the church-going souls to regard him as one on whom the afflatus of genius rests. His higher vociferations they ascribe to a poetic frenzy that has seized him from Parnassus. In these moods he descants on grandeur, indicates an intimacy with the secrets of nature, apostrophises beauty, appeals to the blue eternities, and the people stare and gape, and like the Lystrans, say the "gods are come down to us."

This man, it must be candidly acknowledged, accomplished what he intended. Though he had but little culture, and possessed very meagre information, yet, by dressing up the

best thoughts of our best preachers in the drapery of a somewhat poetical phraseology, as well as by his phrenetic looks and attitudes, and frequent and often apparently impassioned apostrophes, he got to be regarded as a genius by the smaller men of the sect to which he belonged. But he signally failed to solve any man's problems, to settle any man's faith, to indoctrinate any man's soul with the eternal elements of truth. He tickles, but cannot teach.

BETA is a man who differs widely in person from ALPHA. He is tall and weird-looking, lanky and lithe, always in motion; one of those lean men whom our dramatist would have regarded with suspicion, on account of hungry looks. A head remarkably small, held backward by the chain of self-esteem. He is a man of some scholastic attainments, with a good share of imaginative power, and unmeasurable pretence. He is a voluminous author, and he feels it is given to him to solve the great problems of sociology, ecclesiasticism, and metaphysical divinity. His words are always big and abounding. His desire to be grand reveals itself in every sentence, and is sadly manifest in his pulpit achievements. If he does not set himself up as a genius, he does as a profound philosopher, equal to the settlement of any question in Church or State, on earth or in heaven. He reads his elaborately prepared sermons and nods his head, as he rolls out the long and florid sentences, as if he were the infallible dictator of truth. He has no passion in him,—hence he never touches the heart; his philosophy is too weak to satisfy the intellect; his convictions are not vigorous,—hence he but seldom touches the conscience; the most he does is to win admiration for his composition.

GAMMA is a man of a higher type than either ALPHA or BETA. He is of middle stature, has passed the noon of life, and has his face wrinkled with the furrows, and his head whitened with the snow of years. He has a well-formed head, but it exceeds not in dimension the average size of human skulls. He is a man of dignified deportment, and when in the pulpit he impresses you as a man of thoughtfulness and devotion. But his desire to be grand is manifest in the whole structure and style of his discourse. He fringes every sentence, and embroiders every paragraph. As a piece of art his discourse could scarcely fail to gratify the æsthetic in his congregation. He reads the whole, and does it well, with a musical voice, and pathetic solemnity, with elocutionary grace, and rhetoric power. When he has finished, the congregation is unanimous in pronouncing the discourse "a fine sermon," and adjudging their minister as a great preacher: but here the matter ends. The morally apathetic has not been

roused to earnest inquiry, nor has the earnest inquirer been effectively directed. The proud worldling has not been abashed, the weak disciple has not been strengthened or encouraged. Fresh sittings have been let, but no souls have been converted. The preacher has won fresh plaudits, but the great Temple of devotion has gained no accession to its true worshippers. POOR GAMMA ! after all thy hard work (for thou hast given the whole long week to produce this grand sermon) this is the result ! And in the light of eternity it may well make thee tremble.

The other grand preacher that is present to our mind is DELTA. We shall describe him more particularly and give a sketch of his sermon.

EPISCOPUS.

(To be continued).

—o—

A Talmudic Study with St. Paul;

OR,

GLEANINGS FROM DELITZSCH'S NOTES TO HIS "PAULUS DES APOSTELS BRIEF AN DIE RÖMER IN DAS HEBRÄISCHE ÜBERSETZT UND AUS TALMUD UND MIDRASH ERLÄUTERT" (PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS TRANSLATED INTO HEBREW AND ELUCIDATED FROM THE TALMUD AND MIDRASH).

(Continued from p. 299.)

CHAPTER IX.—3. Paul expresses his wish that the punishment of their guilt could fall on him. According to *Sanhedrin*¹ II. 1, the people addressed the High Priest in the words אָנִי כַפָּרָה (I thy atonement) by way of condolence, signifying their readiness to take all suffering upon themselves in his place.

4. "*The glory.*" The reference is to the self-manifestation of the Omnipresence (*Bathra*,² 25^a), especially between the cherubim in the Temple (Ps. xxvi. 8, 3 Macc. ii. 15, f. compared with 1 Sam. iv. 21). Israel has forfeited this with other privileges. *Sota*,³ 3^b: "Before Israel sinned, the Shechinah dwelt with every individual, but after they sinned, the

¹ For the explanation of this term and others not here explained, see the previous portions of this paper in the *Homilist*, March and April, 1871.

² In full *Baba Bathra*, the last gate or section of a Talm. Tract, in three parts, entitled *Nezikim*, "Injuries," a work on Civil Rights in relation to Social Life. ³ A Talm. Tr. on the Wife suspected of Adultery.

Shechinah was withdrawn from them.” “*The covenants.*” With the Patriarchs, Gen. xv., and with Israel, on Sinai, in the Desert of Moab, on Gerizim, vid. *Berachoth*, 48^b, *Sota*, 37^b, *Nedarim*,¹ 31^b. “*The Promises.*” Vid. *Sifri* on Deut. xxxii. 30: If ye keep not the law, how can I fulfil your promise (the promise given to you)?

5. “*God blessed for ever.*” The second David and Jehovah our Righteousness—Jer. xxiii. 6. The Midrash *Mishle* on Prov. xix. 21 reckons יהי צדקנו (Jehovah our Righteousness) with דוד, among the names of Messiah, and both Talm. and Midr., in other passages, bear witness that Messiah is called יהוה (Jehovah).

7. *Isaac the Son of Promise*, according to Gen. xxi. 12. From this passage the Jerus. *Nedarim* infers that “Isaac is the son to whom is assigned the inheritance of two worlds, the present and the future.”

11. The Pharisaic doctrine recognised a predetermination of human destiny, but not of the individual man to godliness or ungodliness.

19. “*Who hath resisted his will?*” *Sifri*, 48^b, on Deut. iii. 24: “The property of the Holy One, blessed be He, is not like that of flesh and blood, *i.e.*, like that of mortal men, among whom the superior invalidates the decision of the inferior; but ‘Thou—who can withstand thy procedure?’ And so it is said, Job. xxiii. 13: ‘He is one, and who can check Him?’”

25. This reference of Hos. ii. 25, to the incorporation of the heathen with the people of God, is in harmony with the exposition of the same passage by R. Jochanan. *Pesachim*,² 87^b.

X.—4. *Christ the end of the law.* *Koheleth rabba*, quoted by Biesenthal, says: “The whole Thora (law) which a man learns in the present life, is idle talk compared with the Thora of Messiah.”

13. Comp. Joel. ii. 32, and Jerus. *Berachoth*: “If a man is in trouble, let him call, not on Michael or on Gabriel, but on me, and I will at once hear him: every one who shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

15. “*How beautiful on the mountains.*” The synagogue also

¹Talm. Tr. on Vows.

²Talm. Tr. on the Passover Feasts.

applies these words to the Messianic times and the proclamation of salvation, which is like the voice of the turtle announcing the spring; *e.g.*, *Pesikta de-Rab. Cahana* 51^a. R. Jose, the Galilæan, said: Great is peace, for the Messiah Himself is called the Prince of Peace, Is. ix. 5, and when He shall be revealed to His people He will begin with peace, for "How beautiful on the mountains," &c. (*Perek Shalom*,¹ towards the end.)

20. Comp. Is. lxx. 1, which is applied, *Talkut Shimoni in loco*, to the heathen, the harlot Rahab being given as a specimen of the one class (those who asked not after), and Ruth the Moabitess of the other (who sought not).

XI.—1. "*I also am an Israelite.*" So Rabbi (*i.e.*, Judah, the Editor of the Mishna), in describing himself as a Benjaminite by the male line, and of the tribe of Judah on the female side. Jerus. *Kilajim*,² ix. 4. *Bereshith rabba*, c. 33, comp. with Bab. *Ketuboth*,³ 55^a. Hillel, R. Judah's grandfather, was descended on his mother's side from David. Jerus. *Taanith*,⁴ iv. 5. Hence the family was Benjaminite on the male side, and Paul's teacher, Gamaliel, was also a blood relation.

4. Comp. *Pesikta de-Rab Cahana*, 110^a. "In the giving of the Law, God spoke to each one according to his power of comprehension."

5. "*A remnant.*" *Sanhedrin* 111^a. The time of Messiah is represented as the counterpart to that of Moses; as of 600,000 who left Egypt, only two entered the promised land, so only a few out of many myriads will be saved at last. The comparison occurs in the course of some remarks on the "third part," *Zech. xiii. 8*.

12. *Israel's restoration the enrichment of the world.* *Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer*, c. 9, we read: "When the children of Israel abide full of trust, under the shadow of their Creator, then they are blessed and sweet, and the world has enjoyment from them."

¹ A Haggadic celebration of the praises of peace, appended to the tract *Derech erez* (two extra-Talmudic tracts, one, *Rabba*, greater, and the other, *Zuta*, lesser, on polite manners).

² Talm. Tr. on the illegal mingling of heterogeneous beasts, plants, and clothing.

³ Talm. Tr. on Marriage Bonds.

⁴ Talm. Tr. on Days of Fasting and Mourning.

24. The reasoning, *a minori ad majus*, is similar in *Sifri*, 21^b, where God says to Israel: "If I found you in a desert land and nourished you there, how much more will I do so when ye come to a land flowing with milk and honey!"

26. In a remarkable passage, *Pesikta de-Rab. Cahana*, 49^b, the Messiah is called the Final Deliverer, in distinction from Moses, the first one.

28. בית הבחירה (House of choice or selection) was an old synagogal name for the temple. (According to Gesenius, however, the root בִּחַר from which בחירה is derived, signifies *to try, to prove.*)

33. "Both of the wisdom and knowledge." Comp. *Elijahu Rabba*:¹ "In the octave of blessed eternity there is no more death for ever and ever, and no sin or punishment of sin, but pure joy in the wisdom and knowledge of God."

35. A free use is here made of the words, Job. xli. 3. Comp. the exposition *Pesikta de-Rab. Cahana*, 75^b: "He who addresses praise to me, to him I first gave a rational soul."

(To be continued.)

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

THE BIRTHRIGHT SOLD.

"And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint. And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die; and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him; and he sold his

birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright." —Gen. xxv. 29-34.

THERE are two characteristics portrayed in these verses:—

I. THE CUNNING MAN.

First: *He waited for the right opportunity.* This was no sudden thought. Jacob had for many a day cast a

¹ In full, *Seder Elijahu rabba*; the first portion of the work on pious and moral life, which bears the collective title of *Tana de-bê Elijahu* (instruction from the school of Elia), and was compiled in Babylon before the year 1000.

longing look on his brother's birthright, and was determined to possess it; so he matured his plan. At last the opportunity came, and he was not slow to avail himself of it. Is not the same crafty, selfish spirit manifesting itself daily around us? In the mercantile world the creditor abides his time, then unmercifully screws the poor debtor. In the political world almost every trickery is resorted to, to obtain office and the emoluments thereof, and the party blow is dealt when the greatest weakness is perceptible. In the so-called religious world, are there not too many traces of this spirit visible? The light, irreverent manner ministers of religion are frequently treated; the split churches; the sensational announcements; the rival church and chapel building, &c., tell a tale well worth listening to.

Secondly: *He employed the likeliest means of gaining his object.* Waited for his return from the field; thought he would be hungry, so the potage is prepared; gold would be of no value to a man on the point of starving; food—the strongest temptation—was presented before him. Men in the present day resort to the basest means to gain their selfish objects. To one in pecuniary difficulties, money is offered at an unconscionable rate of interest, and by this crafty method hun-

dreds of young men have been ruined for life; to another, flattery; and to another, sensual gratification. The cunning tempter, like the angler, has many baits for his victim.

Thirdly: *Took no account of natural ties.* The fraternal feelings were stifled, and the birthright must be obtained, at whatever cost. The designing man looks upon others as so many victims from whom he is determined to extract as much gain to himself as he possibly can. Brotherhood and humanity are meaningless terms to him, Right and wrong have fallen too low in the scale to be of any material consideration; self is the great and only god worshipped by him.

Fourthly: *Made the compact irrevocable.* "Swear to me this day; and he swore unto him." Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, says of Esau, "For ye know, how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."

II. THE SENSUAL MAN.

First: *Lacked resolution.* Esau would soon be home, and his wants supplied; he had in all probability been in the like hungry condition before, but now the temptation was so strong, that the sensual obtained the victory over his higher nature. This is a characteristic of one who has no higher object than the

gratification of the animal senses: he is fickle, restless, running from one object to another, and the higher nature is led into captivity by the lower.

Secondly: *Despised an honourable position.* The birthright was of no little value with regard to the present life, because it contained the chieftainship, the rule over the whole family. Besides this, it included the possession of the promised land, and fellowship with God: Esau knew this as well as Jacob, but he despised it by parting with it for the merest trifle. There are hundreds of the same description in our land to-day. Young men of great abilities, placed in the most favourable circumstances to become men of eminence and power, and thus be the means of leaving an impress on the sands of time for the welfare of the race; they have, however, despised such a position, and have ruined their character, injured their health, and are hastening to a premature grave through their sensuality.

Thirdly: *Lost sight of the future.* True, something of the future is in the remark, "Behold, I am at the point to die; and what profit shall this birthright do to me?" but this only proves the spiritual to be of less value in his sight than the material. The depraved nature calls for present gratification, thinking but little of the future, and

utterly disregards the universal law of God, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Conclusion: *Both characters are unjustifiable.* Some have tried to tone down the conduct of Esau by referring to the circumstances he was in, and that of Jacob by saying that it was the intention of heaven that he should possess the birthright. But he had no right to employ such base means. There they stand on the sacred page as beacons to warn man throughout the ages. CYMRO.

Uckfield.

THE CONJUNCTION OF SECULAR PROSPERITY AND SPIRITUAL PERVERSITY.

"According to their pasture, so were they filled; they were filled, and their heart was exalted; therefore have they forgotten me."—Hosea xiii. 6.

[EXPLAIN the context, point out its literal reference and metaphorical allusions.]

Here we have a conjunction of two things—*secular prosperity and spiritual perversity.* Here are men in good physical circumstances, in rich pastures well fed, getting thereby proud in heart and forgetful of their God. We offer three remarks concerning this conjunction—

I. It is a COMMON CONJUNCTION. How often in the history of the past, how often in existing society, do we find great wealth and great depravity

united! Isay "great wealth," for the force of the Hebrew is, they "were filled very much;" they "were filled exceedingly." God, alas! is forgotten in all the varied classes of society, but more, perhaps, in the "upper ten thousand" than amongst any other class. Wealth in the sinful heart tends—

First: *To promote self-indulgence*—the pampering of appetites and the gratification of sinful lusts.

Secondly: *To foster indolence*. It weakens, and generally destroys, the motive to industry. Life is idled away, and whilst the passions are fattened, the mental and moral powers are enfeebled. It weakens the sense of dependence on God. The wealthy need not pray for their daily bread, and hence they pray not at all, and the spirit of devotion goes out. Their language is, "Soul, thou hast much food laid up for many years," &c.

II. It is an INCONGRUOUS CONJUNCTION. Secular prosperity ought to lead to spiritual devotion. (1.) The more temporal good we have, the more means we have for the promotion of spiritual excellence. Property puts us in possession of a power to procure books, leisure teachers, and all other aids to spiritual improvement. (2.) The more temporal good we have, the more motives we have for the cultivation of spiritual excel-

lence. The Bible urges the mercies of God as an incentive to holy life: "We beseech you by the mercies of God," &c. (3.) The more temporal good we have, the more obligations we have for the cultivation of spiritual improvement. Whilst all are bound to the pursuit of holiness, the power of the obligation increases with the mercies we have received. The rich man is more bound to it than the poor.

Thus the incongruity of the conjunction. It is a monstrous sight—a sight on which the holy intelligences above must look with abhorrence and disgust.

III. It is a SINFUL CONJUNCTION. It is an unholy marriage. The curse of heaven is on it. It is sinful—

First: Because it is an *abuse of God's blessings*. All temporal good is a gift from God, bestowed for the promotion of moral goodness. He who does not use it for this purpose perverts the gifts of heaven.

Secondly: It *involves an infraction of God's laws*. "He has commanded us in everything, by prayer and supplication, to make known our requests unto Him."

CONCLUSION.—"Charge them that are rich in the world, that they be not high-minded, but lay up a good foundation for the time to come." "Go to, ye rich men; weep and howl," &c.

Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. CCCVI.)

Subject: KINGHOOD.

"It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter. The heaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings is unsearchable. Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer. Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness."—Prov. xxv. 2-5.

THE chief work of a man's life will, as a rule, be the chief subject of his thoughts. Solomon was a king, and the kingly idea seemed to be one of the leading ideas in the procession of his thoughts. He therefore frequently regarded men in their relation to human kings, and even the great Creator of the universe he was prone to look upon in the character of a monarch. He, being a king in fact, was tempted to look upon all objects, human and Divine, from the standpoint of kinghood. The text is an illustration of this, and it presents to us—

I. THE DIVINE RULER OF ALL. The Eternal is here brought into comparison with human kings. "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing, but the honour of kings is to search out a matter."

"It is the glory of God to conceal a thing." What does this mean? It does not mean, of course, that it is His glory to employ any *effort* to conceal from His creatures anything connected with His own Being, or with His own workmanship.

The *secretive* attribute in a human being we are ever more disposed to condemn than admire, and such an attribute in God we could never associate with "glory." In truth, any effort to concealment on His part would be (1.) Needless. Who amongst the loftiest intellects in the universe could ever find Him out? He will ever be the Great Mystery in which all finite thoughts are lost. Would be (2.) Unjust. He has endowed His creatures with an imperishable and ever-growing desire to know Him: "The heart and the flesh cry out for the living God." Hence for Him to employ any effort to hide Himself or to obscure His doings, would be unjust to the creatures whom He had invested with such craving. What then is meant by it? Does it mean that His glory is His essential *incomprehensibility*? This is a truth. God is eternally incomprehensible. We are told that "His way is in the sea"—that "His path is in the great waters, and His footsteps are not known"—that "He dwells in the light which no man can approach unto"—that "His ways are unsearchable, and his judgments past finding out."

But this, we think, is not the idea that Solomon had. We are bound to interpret his words by their connexion; and when he says in the next clause that it is "the honour of kings

to search out a matter," it seems very clear that he meant this: that it was "the glory of God" to be independent of all inquiry after knowledge. He means that whilst it was the honour of kings to search for knowledge; it is the glory of God that He does not require it. He has no need to investigate; He has nothing to discover; His knowledge is intuitive, complete, and universal. His omniscience is one of His most glorious attributes.

II. THE HUMAN RULERS OF MEN. Three things are here suggested in relation to human kings:

First: That *honest inquiry in kings is always an excellency*. It is "the honour of kings to search out a matter." It is not for them to assume the attribute of omniscience, and to pretend to know things without the prosecution of an honest search. They should search, in order to get at the eternal principles by which their laws should be shaped, and their whole lives controlled. They should search after the best means for improving the physical, the intellectual, the social, and the spiritual condition of their people. "To search out a matter" pertaining to the interests of man, the cause of truth, and the glory of God, is at once the duty and the dignity not only of kings but of people, not only of men, but of *all* intelligent creatures. Knowledge in all beings, but God, is to be got by inquiry.

Secondly: *That secretiveness in kings is sometimes very impentrateble*. "The heaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings is unsearchable."

This language does not mean (1.) that a secretive policy in kings is justifiable. There may be occasions when rulers may be strongly tempted to spread a veil over their policy so as to conceal it from their subjects; but we are not sure that they are ever justified in doing so. Kings should be always just, and justice need never fear the day. We have no faith in court or cabinet secrecies. This language does not mean (2.) that the kingly heart is something so peculiarly mysterious that it cannot be comprehended. Kings have always assumed a mysterious grandeur, and ignorant people have ever been disposed to regard them as objects high up above, enshrouded in mystic glory.

But this is all nonsense. The king's heart is a common heart, clouded with the common ignorances, and beating with the common defects. What, then, does it mean? Solomon undoubtedly refers to oriental despots, who were always robed in mystery, and gave no account of their doings; like the Emperor of China in the present day: the despot lives in mystery, the people stand in awe, and know not what cloud may appear over them the next minute, and break in thunder over their heads. The subjects of despots may indeed sooner measure the height of heaven and the depth of earth than penetrate the mysteries of their masters.

Thirdly: *That purity in kings depends on the character of their ministers*. All kings, however despotic, have their ministers—men to execute their behests. On these men they are more or less

dependent; these men, the occupants of courts and the members of cabinets, have often been in morals most corrupt and vile, and hence Solomon says—"Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer. Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness." "Here is a comparison. As, in order to the production of a beautiful vessel, such as the refiner would approve and commend, the material of which the vessel is to be made must be purged of its alloy, so, in order to the general government of a prince being of a nature to prove conducive to the benefit of his people and to the stability of his throne, the wicked must be removed from his presence and from all intimacy with his life and counsels." The moral characters of kings have ever been more or less dependent upon the character of their ministers, and are becoming more and more so every day throughout Christendom. Let England see that the members of Her Majesty's Government be men of incorruptible purity, unselfish patriotism, and general Christliness of life.

(No. CCCVII.)

Subject: A CORRUPT AMBITION.

"Put not forth thyself in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great men: for better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; than that thou shouldest be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen."—Prov. xxv. 6, 7.

THE subject of these verses is corrupt ambition. Ambition is a natural instinct of the soul; it is a desire for an advancement in distinguishing excellence.

The Great One implanted it as an eternal stimulant to onwardness in all that is true, virtuous, and Divine. "It is not in man," says Southey, "to rest in absolute contentment. He is born to hopes and aspirations as the sparks fly upwards, unless he has brutified his nature, and quenched the spirit of his immortality which is his portion." But this instinct of the soul, like all others, has been greatly perverted. Instead of being directed to intellectual and moral excellence, to social usefulness, and spiritual devotion, it has been directed to the means of personal aggrandisement and despotic force. It has often urged men to outrage justice, violate domestic sanctities, trample on the rights and lives of men, in order to gain their miserable distinction. "Such ambition," says Sir Walter Scott, breaks the ties of blood, forgets the obligations of manhood."

The text points to a corrupt ambition, and leads us to offer two remarks upon it.

I. It is OBTRUSIVELY FORWARD. "Put not forth thyself (margin—set not out thy glory) in the presence of the king." We see this obtrusive ambition working perhaps more prevalently and more injuriously in the lower than in the higher types of mind. The small-brained men are generally the most obtrusively ambitious. Who are the men in corporation towns who are ever pushing themselves forward to municipal honours? Who are the men in religious denominations that are ever struggling for the most prominent positions? Who are the

men in politics who have the strongest aspirations, and make the most strenuous efforts for Parliamentary work and Parliamentary honour? As a rule, the small-brained men. Thank God! there are exceptions, and the exceptions are our social and political salvation. But as a rule, great men are not ambitious for such distinctions. It is not the "olive tree," or the "fig tree," nor the "vine" in the human forest that will struggle much for such prominent positions, but the "bramble."* This obtrusive ambition of small men is a great evil—

First: It puts them in positions *whose duties they are incapable of fulfilling with thorough efficiency.* How can the "bramble" control the "cedars?"

Secondly: *It keeps back from office better men.* As a rule, the greater the man is, the more modest, the less intrusive, and the more shrinking from responsibility. This intrusive forwardness is a great curse to England at the present moment. It is said that the smallest-headed men in England are in the House of Commons just now, and as a rule they are the most garrulous, prominent, and persistent.

Another remark the text points to, concerning corrupt ambition, is—

II. It is **LIABLE TO HUMILIATION.** "It is better that it be said unto thee, Come up hither, than thou shouldest be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen." The Divine Teacher has given the same command,

"When thou art bidden to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room," &c. (Luke xiv. 8-11). We say it is liable to humiliation. Even here in this life, such corrupt ambition is exposed to humiliation. Small men, who have pushed themselves into prominent positions, are often humbled by the contemptuous criticism of their contemporaries. In the fable of the father and son (Eccles. vii., 4), both were provided with wings; the father is represented as safe in their use, because he only skimmed the ground; but the son, who soared to mid-heaven, fell and perished.

Cardinal Wolsey is an example of the end to which such ambition leads:—

"Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away thy ambition. By that sin fell the angels. How can man, then, the image of his Maker, hope to win by it? Love thyself last; cherish those hearts that hate thee; still in thy right hand carry gentle peace, to silence envious tongues. Be just and fear not. Let all the ends thou aimest at be thy country's, thy God's and truth's; then, if thou fallest, Oh, Cromwell, thou fallest a blessed martyr. Serve the King. And, pr'ythee, lead me in. There, take an inventory of all I have, to the last penny: 'tis the King's—my robe, and my integrity to heaven, is all I dare now call mine own. Oh, Cromwell, Cromwell! had I but served my God with half the zeal I served my king, He would not in mine age have left me naked to mine enemies."

(No. CCCVIII.)

Subject: THE WORST AND BEST

* See "Homilist," Third Series, vol. viii., page 187.

WAY OF TREATING SOCIAL DISSENSIONS.

"Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame. Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself; and discover not a secret to another: lest he that heareth it put thee to shame, and thine infamy turn not away."—Prov. xxv. 8-10.

THE social dissensions that are rife in our world are incontestable proofs that humanity has fallen from its normal condition. There is society in heaven, but no social differences or strifes; but here there are constant dissensions in families, nations, churches. Man is constantly offending his brother, either intentionally or by accident, with malicious or benevolent designs.

The text indicates the best and the worst way of treating such dissensions.

I. THE WORST WAY. "Go not forth hastily to strive."

First: Precipitant strife is *bad in itself*. Calm, deliberate, strife, whether by tongue or fist is bad; it means antagonism to the offender, is inspired with malice, and craves for the infliction of punishment. But hasty strife, for some reasons, is worse; it indicates a petulant nature, an irascible temperament, and is often destitute of any just cause. It may start from mistake, calumny, or misunderstanding. Men should never be hasty in yielding to a passion. They should make the passion, however strong and tumultuous for the moment, the subject of thought, and by thought should subdue, purify, and direct it. A man who acts in a passion, acts not only beneath but against his higher nature and his God.

Secondly: Precipitant strife

exposes to shame. "Lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame." Before the mind of Solomon the following scene seems to have presented itself. Something has come to the ears of A concerning B, which has roused his indignation, and under its influence he rushes forth to meet B, in order to wreak his vengeance. He meets B, and he, conscious of his innocence, stands calmly before him and smiles with a kindly glow, wondering what all this blustering passion means. He speaks a word, and A feels that he is under a wrong impression, that the fire within him has been kindled by a miserable fiction; and he is ashamed of himself, ashamed as his imaginary enemy laughs kindly at him. Thy neighbour A "hath put thee to shame!"

II. The BEST way. "Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself," &c. The direction here seems to imply three things:

First: *That an interview is to be obtained at once with the offender*. "Debate thy cause with thy neighbour *himself*." The man who has injured you should himself be visited by you. You should not go to another first, go directly to him. You have to do with him, and him only, at first.

Secondly: *That an interview is to be obtained in order to talk the offence over*. "Debate thy cause." Not to gratify the anger, not to seek vengeance, not to brawl, but to reason, to talk, to listen to an explanation and the defence (if it admits of defence), to weigh the whole, and respond according to the real merits of the case.

Thirdly: *That the offence must be thus debated before the secret is divulged to another.* "Discover not a secret to another." Let the man who first listens to the offence be the man who has given it; drop it into no other ear. What a strong temptation there is to deviate from this direction.

Fourthly: *That should the secret be divulged to another, the pacific objects of the interview might be nullified.* "Lest he that heareth it," &c. There is great wisdom in this; for should he hear from another your statement of the offence it will give *him* ground of offence, widen the breach, and nullify the desired result. If the offended trumpets the offence in the ear of others before he meets the offender, he has done his offender a wrong, and exposed himself to a lasting in-

famy. "And thine infamy turn not away."

The direction which Solomon gives, of treating an offender, agrees with the direction Christ gives, Matt. xviii. 15-18. Were these counsels acted on, how soon all quarrels as they spring up would be hushed! Beautiful words of Richter on this subject—"Nothing is more moving to a man than the spectacle of reconciliation; our weaknesses are thus indemnified, and are not too costly, being the price we pay for the hour of forgiveness; and the archangel who has never felt anger has reason to envy the man who subdues it. When thou forgivest, the man who has pierced thy heart stands to thee in the relation of the sea-worm, that perforates the shell of the mussel, which straightway closes the wound with a pearl."



The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

PREACHING.

"I LOVE a serious preacher, who speaks for my sake, and not for his own; who seeks my salvation, and not his own vain glory. He best deserves to be heard, who uses speech only to clothe his thoughts, and his thoughts only to promote truth and virtue. Nothing is more detestable than a professed declaimer, who retails his discourses as a quack does his medicine."—MASILLON.

"A woman went one day to hear a famous D.D. preach, and

as usual, carried a pocket Bible with her, that she might turn to any of the passages the preacher might happen to refer to. But she found that she had no use for her Bible there; and coming away, said to a friend, 'I should have left my Bible at home to-day, and have brought my dictionary. The doctor does not deal in Scripture, but in such learned words and phrases as require the help of an interpreter to render them intelligible.'"—ANON.

"A celebrated divine, who was

remarkable in the first period of his ministry for a boisterous mode of preaching, suddenly changed his whole manner in the pulpit, and adopted a mild and dispassionate mode of address. One of his brethren, observing it, inquired of him what had induced him to make the change. He answered, 'When I was young, I thought it was *thunder* that killed the people; but when I grew wiser I discovered that it was the *lightning*. So I determined in future to thunder less and lighten more.'—THORNTON.

" 'The very essence of truth,' says Milton, 'is plainness and brightness; the darkness and crookedness are our own.' 'Better the grammarian should reprehend,' says Jenkyn, 'than the people not understand. Pithy plainness is the beauty of preaching. What good doth a golden key that opens not?' An old lady once walked a great way to hear the celebrated Adam Clarke preach. She had heard he was 'such a scholar,' as indeed he was. But she was bitterly disappointed, 'because,' she said, 'I understood everything he said.' And I knew a man who left the church one morning quite indignant, because the preacher had one thing in his sermon he heard before. It was a little explanation meant for the children; dear little things—they are always coming on, and I love to see their bright little faces among the older people. We used to heed and prize these simple explanations, and why shouldn't they have them in their turn? And this blessed thing is to be said of the Gospel; let it be made ever so simple, so that little children

are drinking it in with grateful wonder: it still has depths and riches to satisfy the mind and heart of the mightiest philosopher, if only he has that highest attainment of wisdom—a simple child-like faith. Like the sun, it is mirrored at the same moment by the dew-drops and the ocean.—DR. HOGE.

"There are preachers so sonorous and fluent in mere wordiness, that the hearers are quite satisfied to hear a fluent, high-sounding wordiness, though there be within it great barrenness of thought, and no spiritual refreshment. The shallow people, who have been accustomed to this sounding brass and tinkling cymbal preacher, cannot endure the ever fresh flow of living thought. For, being long accustomed to a sound and ear ministry under the former, they are in their element, but under the latter they are like fish out of water. In a spiritual element a carnal people cannot breathe with freedom. To be popular, it is not enough that a man be a good talker, he must also be a shallow thinker. Abide in the low plain of thought, and the multitudes will throng you; but ascend to the high mountain height of purer thought, and your multitudes will be reduced to a few disciples."—J. PULSFORD.

"I am tormented with the desire of writing better than I can. I am tormented, say I, with the desire of preaching better than I can. But I have no wish to make fine, pretty sermons. Prettiness is well enough when prettiness is in place. I like to see a pretty child, a pretty flower: but in sermons prettiness is out of

place. To my ear, it should be anything but commendation, should it be said to me, 'You have given us a pretty sermon.' If I were put upon trial for my life, and my advocate should amuse the jury with tropes and figures, or bring his arguments beneath a profusion of flowers of his rhetoric, I would say to him 'Tut, man, you care more for your vanity than for my

hanging. Put yourself in my place—speak in view of the gallows, and you will tell your story plainly and earnestly.' I have no objections to a lady binding a sword with ribbons, and studding it with roses, as she presents to her hero lover; but in the days of battle he will tear away the ornaments and use the naked edge on the enemy."—ROBERT HALL.



Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF WILLIAM URWICK, D.D., OF DUBLIN. Edited by his Son.

THIS memoir satisfies the expectations with which the reader will pass on to its pages after his eye has fallen on the frontispiece. For both portrait and biography reveal a man of large head and large heart. From a somewhat close intercourse for a little while with Dr. Urwick, we were quite prepared to find, whenever his life should be written, that it would win, as it is doing, the attention of still larger circles than that which for many years rejoiced in the instructions and friendship of a man whom sunny humour, deep-toned poetry, vigorous logic, ceaseless industry, unassuming unselfishness, combined to invest with no ordinary ministerial power. For deeply interesting glimpses into varied phases of life, in his adopted Erin; for indications of the best style of expository preaching; for acquaintance with a wide-minded Christian Catholicity; and for the joy of hearing some of the truest pulses of the heart of a reformer, minister, friend, and father, we heartily recommend this book. An intelligent and appreciative son has done his sacred task wisely and well.

BAPTISMAL REGENERATION. By the REV. ENOCH MELLOR, A.M., D.D.
London: Hodder and Stoughton, 27 Paternoster Row.

WE almost regret that a mind of Dr. Mellor's order should employ its high powers and affluent resources in discussing such a dogma as Baptismal Regeneration. What does the great world of humanity care for such a question as this? It is only interesting to crafty priests and sensuous

religionists, which, thank God, constitute but a fraction of the race. Had the author employed the great ability which is manifest in these pages to the discussion of such questions as the necessary conditions of human progress or the rationale of Christianity, we should have had a work of universal interest and permanent usefulness. The rising intellect of the age is in quest of such works, and if the deepening stream of scepticism in this country is to be rolled back, or even checked, it must have such works. We respectfully, but earnestly commend the talented author of this pamphlet to employ his vast reading, his logical acumen, and his vigorous philosophy, on such undertakings. In saying all this, do we disparage this production? By no means. Though brief, it is exhaustive; it implies great labour and immense research. We know of no work on the subject approaching it in thoroughness of investigation, clearness of thought, and condensed vigour of expression.

LIFE AND LABOURS OF DUNCAN MATHESON, THE SCOTCH EVANGELIST.

By Rev. JOHN MACPHERSON. London: Morgan, Chase, and Scott.

THIS book contains eleven chapters, the subjects of which are:—"The Birth and Boyhood of Duncan Matheson—His Youth and Conversion—Spiritual Discipline—his Evangelistic Apprenticeship—His Mission to the Crimea—Days of Revival—The Diocese of open air—His manner of living and mode of working—Some Sheaves from the Harvest-field—From the Furnace to the Sea of Glass, mingled with Fire—Characteristics." This book is brimful of interest, the facts with which it abounds are those that relate to the most vital interests of men, and touch the tenderest sensibilities of human nature. Ministers should read it to catch inspiration from the life of an Evangelist, aflame with love for souls. All who are endeavouring to bring souls to Christ, would do well to con with prayerful attention these pages of a fervent piety.

A SUGGESTIVE COMMENTARY ON ST. PAUL'S EPISTLE TO ROMANS. By Rev.

THOMAS ROBINSON. Vol. I. London: R. Dickson, 73 Farringdon Street.

WE have already called the attention of our readers to this work, part of which appeared a few months ago. We are glad to have this volume, extending over eight chapters of the Epistle to Romans. The plan and execution of the work are alike admirable. Whilst the best light of modern scholarship is brought to bear upon the verses, suggestions are given to help the preacher to construct his sermons. There are no waste words here: but things are here of intrinsic worth and vital moment. Again we commend the work.

READINGS IN HOLY WRIT. By LORD KINLOCH. Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas.

"I HAVE endeavoured," says the author, "in the following pages, to

complete my original design, when publishing my 'Studies for Sunday Evenings': to supply, namely,—Scripture Readings, of an evangelical yet practical character, for more than a whole year of Sundays." The subjects treated in this volume are—The Books of Judges and Kings—The Word of Reconciliation—Grace seasoned with Salt—Revivals—Anti-Christ—Spiritual Darkness—The Book of Ruth—All things working together—Strength from Weakness—The Book of Esther—Knowing the Doctrine—Bereavement—The Things of Cæsar—Sins of Speech—Not Straitened in God—The Shunamite Woman—Self-Denial—The Book of Proverbs—Behold the Man—Weary in well-doing—The Communion of Saints—Perfect through Sufferings—Asleep in Christ—An Old Disciple. The reflections on these subjects are enlightened, serious, and practical.

PATER NOSTER; OR, WHOM AND HOW TO WORSHIP. By REV. CHARLES WELLS, M.A. London: William Macintosh, 24 Paternoster Row.

"THE following lectures," says the author, "contain hints rather than elaborate thought. They constitute a series, for they have a common aim, and are arranged in something like order. The aim is to obtain justice for Christianity by reducing it to its peculiar first principle. Attention to first principles is as needful here as elsewhere. By neglecting them Christianity is exposed to corruption. While in genuine Christianity there is nothing to offend a healthy moral sense, the hard, dry, mechanical versions of it, the caricatures of it, which are too often met with, are the occasion of much unbelief. When the caricature is mistaken for the reality, and the alternative is supposed to be the acceptance of that, or unbelief of Christianity, great mischief is done. Let Christianity only show as she is, and she will both command and attract mankind." We are heartily glad to meet our old friend, the author, once more in the fields of sermonic literature. He is always thoughtful in his utterances and stately in his march. These discourses are brief, but they are full of pith and spiritual pathos.

RELIGION IN EARNEST. By SILAS HENER. Second Edition. London: George Lamb, 6 Sutton Street, Commercial Road.

THE subjects of this volume are—Freedom of Inquiry in matters relating to Religion—The Bible and the Religion of the Bible—The Vanity of Worldly pleasures, and the sufficiency of Religion—The Nature and Fruits of Repentance—Regeneration, or the Spiritual Birth—Conditions of Justification—Saving Faith, and its Effects—Love to God—How to obtain Heavenly-mindedness—Reasons for Searching the Scriptures, and How to Search them—Intellectual Improvement—The Gospel and its Professors—The great Importance of minding Little Things—Finery of Dress and useless Ornaments—Christian Liberality—Love and Beneficence—The Duty of Christians to care for Souls—Conditions of Availing Prayer—Entire Gratification—The Growing Beauty of the

Christian Character—Persecution Inseparable from Eminent Faithfulness. These subjects are here treated in a spirit reverent, catholic, and earnest, and with considerable intellectual force and literary ability.

FATHER HYACINTHE: ORATIONS, WITH A SKETCH OF HIS LIFE. London: Morgan and Chase.

THE FAMILY AND THE CHURCH: ORATIONS BY FATHER HYACINTHE. London: Morgan and Chase.

THESE volumes contain the Life and chief Discourses of a very remarkable man,—a man not only of great ability, extensive culture, and oratoric power, but a man of vigorous Christian conscience.

THE GOSPELS INTERWOVEN: A NARRATIVE OF OUR LORD'S EARTHLY MINISTRY. By E. YATES. London: Morgan, Chase, and Scott.

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